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Protests force BBC to shelve changes

By Raymond Snoddy and Carol Midgley

THE BBC backed down yesterday over proposed changes to television and radio news after a wave of protest from key presenters and editors. Sir Christopher Bland, Chairman of the BBC Board of Governors, intervened to suspend the moves as Tony Hall, the BBC's chief executive of news, admitted that neither the governors nor John Birt, the Director-General, had been fully apprised of the detail of the changes before they were announced. The governors were understood to have been taken aback by them.

"not detract from the quality, programme identity and editorial values of BBC News". Many staff said they regarded this as a face-saving exercise for the top management and that the reforms would be quietly dropped. Mr Hall said he would not resign.

The stay of execution was agreed at a heated meeting yesterday morning between Sir Christopher, Mr Birt and Mr Hall, who devised the changes. Mr Birt said: "We have got to pause and explain to people what Tony Hall and his colleagues have in mind." He agreed that he did not know about the detailed proposals announced to BBC journalists this week, "nor would I want to".



Ford: signed letter attacking proposals

James Naughtie and editors whom he "greatly valued". He said: "I accept they are not happy and there is a need to pause and discuss the proposals we have put forward." In a further climbdown, Mr Hall said that he was willing to restore the title of editor to the present editors of flagship programmes such as *Today* and *The World at One*. Previously it had been announced that all BBC news programmes on radio and television would lose their individual editors and be managed wholesale by a team of five "super-editors". The reforms will be reviewed by the governors next month to ensure that they will

not detract from the quality, programme identity and editorial values of BBC News". Many staff said they regarded this as a face-saving exercise for the top management and that the reforms would be quietly dropped. Mr Hall said he would not resign.



Happy landing: The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, meets children dressed as monks at Ash, Kent, yesterday as he re-enacted the arrival of St Augustine in 597

A low-key welcome on the hillside

By Stephen Farrell

THE ISOLATED former Benedictine monastery doubling as Wales's smallest polling station yesterday reported a low turnout in the devolution referendum.

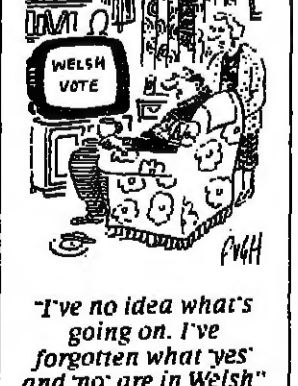
Stanley Knill, 64, opens his home to 22 electors at Capel-y-fffin, in the Black Mountains near Hay-on-Wye but reported a lower level of interest than in other elections during his 12 years there.

"I haven't seen the usual faces. We normally get 70 to 80 per cent turnout here but we have had only ten people," he said last night.

He freely admits to voting in favour of devolution but said few were interested in the issue.

"There's been very little talk about it here. I was the first to vote and the next lot came up on horseback. I don't expect to see the others."

But both "yes" and "no" camps in Cardiff were last night predicting a higher turnout than expected thanks to the September sunshine.



Photograph, page 22

Fan club, page 2

British exodus after Egypt terror attack

By Harvey Elliott
TRAVEL CORRESPONDENT

HUNDREDS of British tourists were evacuated last night from Cairo as the city was unofficially declared a no-go area for foreign holidaymakers after suspected Muslim militants attacked a tourist bus, killing ten people.

Egyptian security sources said all who died were inside the bus parked near the Egyptian Museum at Tahrir Square, home of the world's greatest collection of Pharaonic artefacts, including the 3,300-year-old golden treasures of Tutankhamun.

Police said that 19 other Egyptians and tourists were wounded in the gun

and bomb attack, which gutted the tourist bus. There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but security sources said police arrested three suspected militants and were hunting for two more. "The whole place was in panic," said Stephen Thomas, a British tourist who was in the museum with his wife and two children.

Package tour groups visiting the Egyptian capital were being contacted by most of the leading companies and taken by bus to their Nile cruise ships or Luxor. Cairo is not a main destination for British package holidaymakers, most of whom take cruises along the Nile or stay in Luxor, making occasional day trips to Cairo's muse-

ums. But, with an opera festival starting next week, hotels in Luxor and Cairo are full, though the peak season does not begin until October. Thomson said that it would "evacuate" nearly 100 clients from Cairo and had temporarily cancelled cruise tours to the city from Cyprus and the Red Sea. Thomas Cook said it had almost 200 clients in Egypt and British Airways Holidays more than 100.

About 320,000 Britons visit Egypt each year, mainly in the winter season. The country has been proving increasingly popular, with a big growth in Nile cruises. In 1992, 15,000 British holidaymakers took a cruise but by last year this had jumped to 70,000. With

thousands of tourists due to fly to Egypt in the next few weeks, tour operators were last night ringing each of them to ask if they wished to continue, take another holiday or cancel.

"We are keeping in close touch with the Foreign Office and will then be offering customers the option of cancelling if they wish," said Alan Flook, chairman of the Federation of Tour Operators. "We are certainly not going to be back in Cairo tomorrow."

The Association of British Tour Operators said travel agents were liaising with the Foreign Office.

Cairo slaughter, page 13
Leading article, page 19

Churchill's 'shabby' grave is rescued

By Damian Whitworth

THE humble grave of Sir Winston Churchill and the quiet English churchyard where he is buried are to receive a £350,000 refurbishment after more than three decades of tourists have left the spot looking "shabby and unloved."

Winston Churchill, the former MP and grandson of Britain's wartime leader, is using some of the £12.5 million he received from the sale of the Churchill archive to lead a family rescue of the churchyard at Bladon, Oxfordshire. A section of the churchyard, near the Blenheim estate where Sir Winston was born, will be closed for six months.

Sir Winston, who died in 1965, had specified that he wanted to be buried in the place that he had known from childhood. He shares a grave with Lady Churchill who died in 1977 and they lie beneath an inconspicuous slab of Portland stone.

It is estimated that around 350,000 tourists visit the site

every year, or one pilgrim for every pound that will be spent.

Mr Churchill said: "The ground slopes and there is subsidence. Slowly, but perceptibly, the graves are sliding down the hill. There are particular problems when two or three busloads arrive simultaneously. There is just this very narrow path so they spill off and trample over the graves. When the weather is wet the whole area looks shabby and unloved."

The architect William Bertram said that his design had intended to provide access while preserving the traditional churchyard. A concrete path will be torn up and a wider walkway, of York stone, will run around the perimeter. A chain fence will discourage visitors from crossing the graves and benches will be provided.

Sir Winston's tombstone will be replaced and set on a raised step.

Getting the picture, page 5

Ink thrown at Hindley picture

Ink and eggs were hurled at the controversial portrait of Myra Hindley at the Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, yesterday by two men, apparently acting independently of each other.

One of them smuggled in the ink in two 35mm film canisters. The damage was serious enough for the painting to be withdrawn and it is not expected to be back on show for several days.

Both men, one an artist, were arrested for causing criminal damage. Page 9

Pollution linked to macho ads

The motor industry was attacked over links between pollution and the macho culture of high-performance cars. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution said technology could deliver cars 40 per cent more fuel efficient and less damaging to the environment.

A commission report decried the advertising of cars which put engine size, luxury and acceleration over protecting public health. Page 8

Curtains for the council chamber ogglers

By Daniel McGrory

SO MANY male members of a Yorkshire council were distracted during meetings by the legs of their female colleagues that a councillor insisted that desks should be fitted with "modesty" curtains.

East Riding council has spent £645 on the cover-up after Dave Ireland, a Liberal Democrat, complained that many of his colleagues spent their time voting on who had the best legs rather than council business.

"I think it's extremely distracting for male councillors with reasonable lev-

els of testosterone to sit there, especially if you have legs like one or two of the councillors do," Mr Ireland said. "Men are men but we have to concentrate on the business. I brought the matter up because the female members shouldn't have to go to a meeting and worry about the way they are sitting."

His party leader, Bob Tress, said: "I'm sure that Councillor Ireland, who is a very decent and gallant man, is not suggesting that he is surrounded by dirty old men."

Yesterday 15 councillors were sitting around the offending tables in the

Humberside Room for a planning committee. Each table had beige curtains reaching to the floor.

Mr Tress said: "I can't understand the fuss because unless you are fastening your shoelace you cannot see much beyond a lady's knee," adding that he had never put this to the test.

One woman official said: "There are 21 women on a council of 67 and the average age is 48 so they are hardly the Spice Girls driving these foolish old men to distraction."

Liberal Democrat Colleen Gill, known for her daring choice of mini

skirts, thought someone was pulling her leg when told about the modesty curtains. "I like to show my legs off and distract other councillors from political arguments. I think that if you have got a good figure you should be off. I am proud of my legs and do not want them covered up."

The Tory Group were more concerned about the cost. Professor Arthur Pollard, the Conservative group secretary said: "Obviously one sees the legs, but if you are attending to council business you look across at their faces, not their legs, whether they are men or women."

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BY MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

The BBC is this morning offering a media preview of the first programme in a four-part series entitled *The Provos: The IRA and Sinn Féin*. To be broadcast nationwide on BBC1 beginning next Tuesday. The programme is understood to include interviews



Tony Hall, chief executive of BBC News. It was rumoured that he offered to cut twice as much as asked for

By CAROL MIDGLEY
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

He is one of the most powerful men in the corporation, in overall charge of the world's biggest news organisation employing 2,000 journalists, 42 foreign bureaux

However, feeling against him has grown with a rumour that when Mr Birt, the Director-General, asked for 15 per cent cuts in news, Mr Hall offered him 30 per cent — to Mr Birt's delight. It was Mr Hall, 46, who instructed

senior management how to implement the changes which have caused mutiny among the staff. Even he, who was responsible for merging the news and current affairs departments of television, radio and foreign in 1987, was yesterday said to be taken aback by the ferocity of the resistance.

Richard Clemmow, the BBC's mild-mannered head of news programmes, was reportedly "white with shock" when staff met the proposals with a volley of protest on Wednesday.

Staff say they recognised

"They are John Birt's personal police force," one said. "They suggest things in theory but do not get involved in the messy implementation. But John Birt swears by them and if an executive wants to get his measures through he will hire McKinsey to do it. They are clinical, methodical strategists."

Leading article, page 19

Mr Smith argued that he wanted digital television to succeed on all delivery platforms to ensure universal access to current public-service channels but added: "I want that access as soon as possible ... so as to end the current wasteful use of valuable radio spectrum for analogue terrestrial broadcasting."

Leading article, page 19

By RAYMOND SNODDY
MEDIA EDITOR

In the digital age of multi-channel television, public-service broadcasters would be as important as ever. "However, it needs to be something distinctive and special with corresponding distinctive regulatory arrangements," Mr. Smith said. In addition, it was clear that the arrangements for regulating media competition needed to be reconsidered as part of an overall re-examination.

Mr Smith argued that he wanted digital television to succeed on all delivery platforms to ensure universal access to current public-service channels but added: "I want that access as soon as possible ... so as to end the current wasteful use of valuable radio spectrum for analogue terrestrial broadcasting."

Leading article, page 19

Professor Harris

Professor Martin Harris, chairman of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, appealed to the Government to keep its side of the fees bargain by ensuring that the money raised went to higher education.

Lottery grants of £100 million were announced for learning and training projects. Recipients include a community group that provides classes for expelled pupils, a network of after-school clubs, an educational centre for migrants and refugees, and a club that provides intensive tutoring for children who have difficulty reading.

A 46-year-old man was last night charged with the murder of Rachel Barracough, 18, who was found dead with multiple stab wounds on wasteland in Wakefield. Rachel went missing after leaving her home in Bradford on September 5 to meet friends. The man is due to appear before Wakefield magistrates today.

Merseyside Police are investigating reports that a care worker with a history of mental health problems had jobs in at least three homes where young, disabled people died unexpectedly. The National Register for Carers reported the man after becoming suspicious about his movements from one home to another.

Midge Mather, 65, was given a conditional discharge at Chippenham magistrates court yesterday after being found guilty of causing criminal damage by cutting the bell ropes in her local church in Compton Bassett, Wiltshire. She said the church had ignored her frequent complaints about the noise of bell-ringing.

Kent and Canterbury Hospital, which incorrectly gave a Chris Gough the all clear after a smear test, wrote recalling her for further checks 15 months after she died of cervical cancer. The hospital has apologised to her husband Glyn for any distress caused, an inquiry into the blunder, which involved 700 tests, heard.

BY VALERIE ELLIOTT, WHITEHALL EDITOR

The Cabinet Secretary has set up a committee to look into the work of the Government Information Service and asked Alastair Campbell, the Downing Street Press Secretary, to take part. Last week *The Times* reported that there was unease in the ranks of the small Press Officers' Group. Four senior information officers were moved from their posts and others believed they were threatened. The working party will be chaired by Robin Mounfield, Permanent Secretary at the Office of Public Service inside the Cabinet Office.

In a letter to all Permanent Secretaries, Sir Robin says that the Government group to find out what ministers want from their information divisions "and how we can ensure that it is provided". Sir Robin

Sir Robin's letter to colleagues accepts that there are still reething troubles between ministers and officials, but explains: "We are still in a transitional period, during which the new Government and the Civil Service are learning about each other. Misunderstandings and miscommunication are the bane of such times."

Mike Grannat, head of the Government Information Service has circulated a morale-boosting letter to all government press officers setting out areas for change but stating unequivocally: "We are not facing a takeover by political advisers."

The needs to provide a different public relations service for the Government will be the main topic at a conference for senior press officers in York at the end of the month. Mr Grannut makes clear, however, that ministers have no intention of criticising the Information Service and that

Complaints or unhappiness from ministers have been more to do with personality clashes, or a belief that the government PR machine could be sharper. Mr Grannan has discussed the low morale in the GIS with Sir Robin and Peter Mandelson, the minister charged with government presentation. He told colleagues in his letter that his first

Mr Grannat reveals that he has told ministers that some tactics deployed by the Labour Party spin doctors would not be used by civil servants.

"When pressed, I made it clear that I do not consider it is the job of civil servants to chase broadcasters about minutiae, twists and turns of coverage, or to nag them over how many seconds each protagonist enjoys on air. That has more to do with party political emphasis than governmental work."

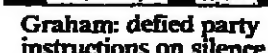
BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

was suspended by the party last month pending investigations into Mr McMaster's death, denied spreading rumours about the late Paisley South MP and instead accused other unnamed politicians of attempting to turn Mr McMaster against him.

Ignoring party instructions to keep quiet until the inquiry into sleaze in Paisley was completed, Mr Graham insisted that he had had a "fabulous relationship" with Mr McMaster. He backed it up by saying that they had become "pals" as hobs and only last

His remarks contrasted sharply with statements made in early August, just weeks after the suicide, in which he claimed that Mr McMaster was "ill with the booze" and said that the former MP had once confronted him and accused him of spreading rumours that he was "a poof".

The remarks were quickly dismissed yesterday as a "bleeding heart story" by sources close to Mr McMaster, who was found dead in his car in July. "He wants people to feel sorry for him. Frankly, that does not cut much ice."



The source added that the football match Mr Graham was supposed to have attended with Mr McMaster last year, was watched by a number of invited MPs in a

In his interview yesterday in *The Scotsman*, Mr Graham also claimed that he had contacted the party's Waltham Road headquarters three weeks before the MPs suicide to complain about the selection procedure in his own Renfrewshire West constituency, which together with both Paisley seats is currently under investigation by the party.

Yesterday a Labour spokesman described Mr Graham's outburst as "unhelpful". He added: "It was made clear to him that it would be sensible not to speak to the press while the inquiry is going on."

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GP helped Lady Warnock's husband die

Medical ethics adviser reveals how she turned for help to doctor who backs euthanasia. Joanna Bale reports

BARONESS WARNOCK, a member of the Archbishop of Canterbury's advisory group on medical ethics, revealed yesterday how her husband was helped to die by a doctor who advocates euthanasia for terminally ill patients.

In a show of support for Dr Nick Maurice, a Wiltshire GP who created controversy last week by admitting that he practises euthanasia on terminally ill patients, Lady Warnock revealed how her husband's life was deliberately brought to a peaceful and dignified end 18 months ago.

Although Dr Maurice has attracted criticism, he is not said to be breaking the law and is not being investigated by the police or any medical authorities.

Lady Warnock, whose elderly husband Sir Geoffrey

Warnock, a former Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, died of a rare lung disease, said: "Dr Nick treated my husband when he was dying of a lung condition that was incurable and extremely painful. There were no arguments used. Dr Nick was just so deeply involved. We just trusted one another."

She and their five adult children knew what the doctor was going to do, she said. "We all knew my husband was going to die and Nick told me he was going to make him better. When he said that we all knew what this meant — end his suffering and end his life."

"Nick changed the medication and probably gave him more morphine, thus ending his life two weeks before he would have died. During the

last years he lived a horrible life. He was not in agony but he could not breathe properly and was always in fear of suffocating."

"Nick and I never had a conversation about my husband's wishes, but Geoffrey did say to him he wanted it all to end. Nick's intentions were to make his last days altogether more comfortable by giving him more morphine. It was what my husband wanted."

"The sad thing was there was nothing wrong with my husband's mind while he went through this. He would lie there but know exactly what was wrong."

"Geoffrey died with dignity and if he had not had his medication changed he would probably have only lived for another fortnight."

Lady Warnock said her



Lady Warnock: "It was what my husband wanted" Dr Nick Maurice: "Every other GP is doing it"

views had been strengthened by talking to doctors while serving on the recent House of Lords select committee on euthanasia. "I talked to lots of doctors who said they gave more drugs to help end their patients' suffering. It's something that doesn't really need

to be explicitly talked about.

"I don't feel the law should be changed because it would be so hard to define in legislation how it should be carried out. Doctors already do this themselves and it works well."

Dr Maurice, who has been

the Warnocks' GP for six years, caused the controversy last week when an article he wrote condoning euthanasia in his practice newsletter was picked up by national newspapers. He confessed to having induced a "quiet and easy death" for two patients in the previous three months for which their relatives had been "grateful".

He also invited his patients to fill in living wills, known as Advanced Directives, in which they can specify that if they were to become terminally ill, painkillers should be used if necessary, even though they may shorten life. He also argued that patients would suffer if laws were introduced governing euthanasia.

Lady Warnock, a former fellow and tutor in philosophy at Oxford University, wrote a personal letter of support to Dr Maurice. She went on: "I absolutely agree with what both Dr Nick is doing and

what he has said about not changing the law. It was the conclusion of a House of Lords select committee on euthanasia."

Dr Maurice said yesterday that he had not received any complaints from his patients about the availability of living wills at his busy surgery in Marlborough where seven other doctors practise. He said: "We introduced them six months ago because people have increasingly begun to ask for them. Each doctor in the practice has them to give to patients."

Dr Maurice went on: "I am doing what every other GP in the country is doing but because I was prepared to raise my head above the parapet it has provoked this debate."

"I have given sufficient quantities of morphine to ensure that the physical and mental suffering of the patient, and the relative also, has been kept to a minimum.

It would be true to say that in a small proportion of patients who have been in intense and sudden pain, or who are in great distress and may require very large doses of morphine, that this may hasten their death.

"These are terminally ill patients with only a few days left. In the vast majority of cases the pain relief lengthens their lives."

A General Medical Council spokesman said: "We are not investigating this matter."

Among those to back Dr Maurice is Dr James Flood, a GP in Devizes, Wiltshire. He said a clear distinction had to be made between illegal euthanasia, when a doctor helps a patient to commit suicide, and the easing of pain among the terminally ill.

"There is a huge medical and ethical difference and there is a great danger of confusion. Dr Maurice is talking good medical sense about the care of his patients."

Victory for high-flyer who put family first

Record company executive quit life

of travel to see his daughter grow up.

Stephen Farrell sees him celebrate

A RECORD company executive had a stark choice between seeing more of the world and seeing his baby daughter grow up. James Whyte put his family first and quit his jet-setting job.

Yesterday an industrial tribunal in London supported his stand by awarding him £9,020 compensation for constructive dismissal, over the way that the record company EMI had suddenly increased the amount of time he was expected to spend away from home from 40 per cent to 75 per cent of his work.

Employment lawyers forecast last night that the ruling would mark a new emphasis on family values. Mr Whyte, 32, who now works as a management consultant, said: "People aren't scared to put their family first any more. All the people slightly older than me in the business had said that if they had one regret, it was that they didn't see their own children grow up." His

daughter, Emma, is 18 months. His wife, Jo, 31, who had to work while her husband was unemployed, said: "It was absolutely terrifying when he walked home and said he hadn't got a salary any more."

"It was the right thing to do. He's a devoted family man and I wouldn't have expected him to do anything different, but he did shed a few tears over losing his company BMW."

Mr Whyte, a £40,000 information technology audit executive from Battersea, South London, told the tribunal he flew to San Francisco, Tokyo, and all over Europe in his two years with EMI, which owns Virgin Records. He said that,

when he joined in 1995, he was told he would be expected to travel only 40 per cent of the time.

In March 1997, while working on EMI's complex artist royalty system in New York, he was presented with the 75 per cent requirement as a "fair compromise", he said. He refused out of "frustration and anger", and quit in April.

He said: "It was an enormous issue for me. Why would I be willing to accept the 75 per cent requirement? I had a young family."

"There had been no notice for me to raise my objections. I was required to start in New York in a week and a half's time. I wanted to protect my position. I was a little guy

up against an enormous company."

EMI said that he was advised of the change a month before, and accused him of failing to follow established grievance procedures. However, Mr Whyte insisted he had simply tried to resolve the situation as best he could and blamed the company's intransigence. He said that the company had wanted him to travel to San Francisco the day his wife was due to give birth.

The tribunal took just 15 minutes to decide that Mr Whyte had been constructively dismissed. The chairman, John Metcalf, said that "some people might regard 40 per cent travel or even more as an advantage". Nevertheless, the tribunal bench ruled: "We find it to be a fundamental term in his contract that foreign travel was up to no more than 40 per cent. The requirement of a commitment to 75 per cent was clearly a breach of that fundamental term."

The tribunal also found no business need for Mr Whyte to travel 75 per cent of the time: "Even if there had been, the reasonableness requirement would not have been met by the attitude shown and actions taken by the employer."

After the case, Mr Whyte said: "I was going to miss my lovely BMW 3-series coupe, the £300-a-year private health insurance and free CDs every month. But if I didn't do it I would never have seen my daughter starting to crawl, walk and recognise me as daddy."

"It is part of common sense and human decency. Seeing your children grow up only happens once."



James Whyte and his wife, Jo. She said: "He shed a few tears over his BMW"

Age fear led perm tycoon to take his life

By MICHAEL HORNSWELL

A MEMBER of the hairdressing dynasty that helped to develop the ladies' perm has killed himself, fearing the onset of old age and Alzheimer's disease.

Charles Kropacsky checked into an hotel near the M4 and suffocated himself on his 83rd birthday, an inquest in Devizes, Wiltshire, was told yesterday. Mr Kropacsky, whose family is of Hungarian origin, was said to have been terrified of losing his mind or becoming wheelchair bound and a burden on his family.

A detailed suicide note addressed to the coroner was left on the bedside table by Mr Kropacsky, who was in perfect health. His son William, 49, told the inquest: "He never held back the fact that he would take his own life if he thought it was the right time."

"His father had been confined to a wheelchair and his mother had Alzheimer's."

Mr Kropacsky, of Lymington, Hampshire, was responsible for several advances in hair care before retiring from London to the New Forest in the 1960s. He was said to be deeply upset by the death of his wife, Jean, 83, last year.

Mr Kropacsky had two other sons, Nicholas, 51, an airline pilot, and Christopher, 53, a civil engineer.

The modern process of permanent waving of the hair was conceived by Charles Nestle who announced a demonstration in Oxford Street, London, in the *Hairdressers' Journal* in 1906 "to withstand water, shampoo and all atmospheric influences".

In 1909 Nestle took out a patent on an electrical heater, a contribution to the invention having been made by Mr Kropacsky's father, also Charles, who went on to develop the process with others, including Eugene Suter.

Nicholas Kropacsky said: "My grandfather Charles was involved in creating the Eugene Permanent Wave in the 1930s. My own father helped him with his work and carried on when my grandfather left the business."

The Kropacsky family business, Camilatone, which made hair care products was started in 1920 and was sold off in 1952. Mr Kropacsky developed a conditioner called Vitapont, which became popular with women after the war.

How a trip to the hairdresser left woman paralysed

By IAN MURRAY



Jane Hughes: artery in neck had been stretched

A VISIT to the hairdresser turned into a near disaster for Jane Hughes. She went in to have her long hair set and washed but ended up partially paralysed and wondering if she would ever walk again.

Mrs Hughes, 44, suffered a stroke caused by her neck being stretched back while she was having her hair washed. Her "beauty parlour syndrome" ordeal two years ago is described today in the medical journal *The Lancet*.

The stylist had tipped the chair back and stretched her neck back over the sink in the normal way.

Everything seemed all right until she got up to walk home. Mrs Hughes found she had difficulty walking and was dragging her left leg. She had trouble driving back to her home in Bath, but managed it. Once home she found herself unsteady on her feet and with increasing numbness in her left hand.

The next morning she could not drink her tea properly and she decided to go to the Royal United Hospital. "I thought I had trapped a nerve and when they suggested I stay in hospital I said no because I had a child and two dogs to look after."

An appointment was made for her to see a neurologist the next day, but

that evening she fell on the way to the bathroom and found she was unable even to crawl. In the morning she could not stand and was admitted to hospital. "I was very frightened and couldn't understand what was going on," she said yesterday. "All that I had done was get my hair washed."

Dr David Bateman, who treated her for a stroke, describes the case in *The Lancet*. He was at first puzzled about what caused the stroke. Mrs Hughes had no history of illness.

Her blood pressure was normal. She was not a diabetic. She did not smoke and usually drank no more than the recommended quantity of alcohol. She had one son, who was

born normally 15 years earlier.

A scan discovered that the lining of the arteries of her neck had torn away and was blocking the passage of blood to her brain. This can happen in older people or to those with arterial disease, but Mrs Hughes fitted neither category. The only thing that he could think of was the visit to the hairdresser.

What happened was that in pulling back her neck to wash the hair, the stylist had inadvertently stretched the artery in the neck causing a tear in the lining, which led to blood clots forming. This had caused the stroke.

"Washing hair with the neck extended or the chair tilted backwards is a common practice because the position avoids soap getting into the eyes," Dr Bateman writes. "This practice is not without risk and hairdressers should be instructed not to overextend the neck and should use the cushion usually provided."

Two years later, treatment with anticoagulants and neuro-physiotherapy has almost cured Mrs Hughes, although her left hand is still very weak. She now keeps her hair short and always has it washed leaning forward over the sink.

The hairdressing training board said: "As part of the course for an NVQ we teach that the head and neck must be protected at all times."

for them hath the LORD chosen to carry

Chronicles 15:2

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of wine's
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Christie's toasts the sale of wine's holy relics

By Philip Davies
Broughton

WITH a slurp and a wet, cellar cough, the auction of the greatest private wine collection to come to the market began at Christie's in London yesterday.

The 18,999 bottles of grand cru champagnes, clarets, white wines, ports, pudding wines and cognacs are being sold by an anonymous owner over four sessions ending today.

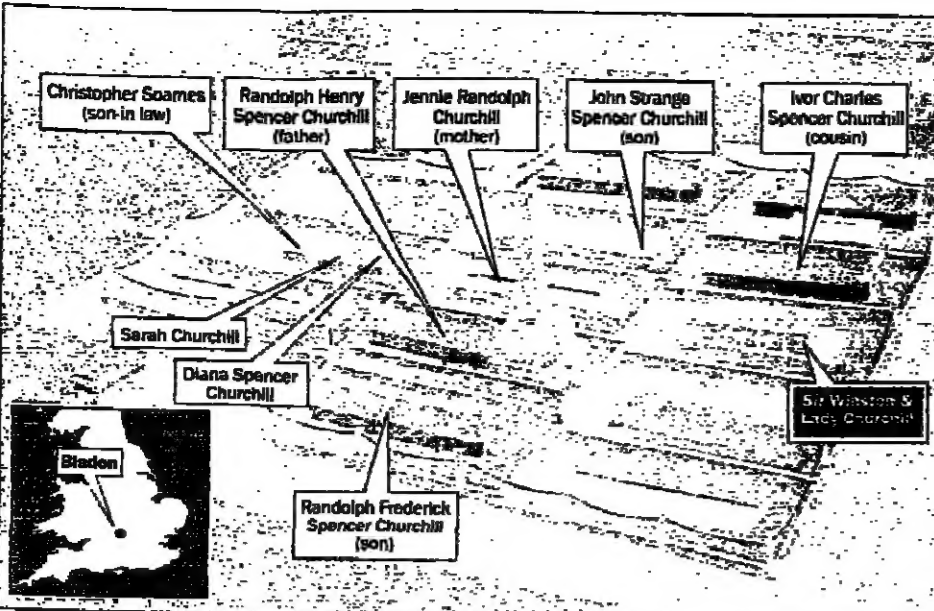
Some of the highlights are on display: Chateau d'Yquem wrapped in sugary tissue paper and extremely rare 12-bottle cases of Petrus arranged like holy relics.

First for sale, however, were the champagnes. The Japanese in the crowd and on the telephones splashed out. Six bottles of Louis Roederer Cristal, vintage 1966, went for £1,300, a case of Dom Perignon Rose, 1969, for £3,600. Pink champagne is said to be a fine accompaniment to sushi.

As the time came for the red Bordeaux 1899-1990, a different sort of nose took over the sal room. Men with long, sloping, dual foreheads loped in, armed with the full mandate of the wine committees of gentlemen's clubs.

As the claret sale started to swing, the prices began whooshing up: £19,000 for an imperial of Mouton-Rothschild 1929, £20,000 for a case of Latour 1937, £62,000 for an imperial of Cheval Blanc 1947.

In two minutes, a telephone buyer had spent £204,000 on claret. One hopes he takes longer to drink it, unless of course he has some brilliantly vulgar drinking game in mind.



The new layout of the family graves, as proposed by the Churchill Grave Trust

Tourists fail to get the picture at Churchill grave

Alan Hamilton reports on why visitors feel the £350,000 refurbishment of Sir Winston's grave is so badly needed

FOR Harry Templeton from San Jose, California, his first sight of Sir Winston Churchill's grave yesterday was something of a disappointment. His camcorder could not make out the faded names engraved on the simple tomb at Bladon, Oxfordshire.

The £350,000 refurbishment which begins next month to restore a site left shabby and apparently unloved by three decades of tourists beating a path to the churchyard gate could not come a moment too soon for visitors.

On the last stop of a 23-day tour of Britain and Ireland, Mr Templeton had expected something a little grander than a plain horizontal slab of Portland stone, engraved only with the names of Winston and Clementine and their respective dates. Or at least something he could record for the neighbours back home.

"I pointed the camcorder but it wouldn't pick up the inscription at all. I had to read it onto the soundtrack," he said. "They could clean this place up; Churchill is very revered in the US. I expected



Churchill: wanted to be buried in simple grave

something bigger, but if this is what he wanted, that's fine by me. I just think they could look after it better."

Joy Spurrell, from Toronto, was equally underwhelmed. "It's not as prominent as it should be, and the grave-stones look older than they actually are. I expected better for such a great man. Graves need perpetual care."

Churchill lies surrounded

by his parents, Randolph and Jennie, his brother John, cousin Ivor, son Randolph, daughters Diana and Sarah and his son-in-law Lord Soames. All are plain, huddled in a plot hard by the church wall, and although far from neglected look tired and unimpressive.

They are surrounded by a weary sprinkling of gravel, and yesterday only one had flowers, that of Christopher Soames, still cared for by his widow and children. Cheap and undistinguished notices identify each family member.

Sir Winston's headstone has already been replaced at least once since his burial in 1965. Churchill's love of Bladon stemmed from early visits to his father's tomb, the only one with any ornament, being surrounded by a simple Celtic stone cross. At the age of 11, he wrote to his mother: "I went this morning to Bladon to look at Papa's grave. I was so struck by the sense of quietness and peace, as well as the old-world air of the place that my sadness was not unmingled with solace." His



Visitors take close-ups of the worn inscription on Churchill's grave yesterday

burial at Bladon, like that of Diana, Princess of Wales at Althorp, was a private family affair.

The only other memorial to him there is a board in the porch recording that, at his interment, a peal of Plain Bob Minor was rung on the church's half-muffled bells.

Several years ago plans for a much grander Churchill family tomb in the churchyard were rejected by the parochial church council, reflecting the desire of a majority of local people to adhere to Sir Win-

ston's wish for simplicity. But the refurbishment now planned by Winston Churchill, Sir Winston's grandson, has the full approval of the Rev Roger Humphreys, rector of Bladon and Woodstock and a trustee of the new project. "This is essentially maintenance. The graves are beginning to suffer from tourist fatigue; we get an average of two coachloads a day throughout the year."

Two categories of complaint reach the rector's ears: those from tourists who expect to see

the British equivalent of the Kennedy grave at Arlington and those who complain that the plot is scruffy and uncared for. "The locals still have a pride that Winston is here. They would want the grave kept much as he wanted it himself. If anything too elaborate had been planned, I think there would have been strong local resistance," he said.

But at least future camcorder wielders should be satisfied; the lettering on the new gravestones is to be raised in relief rather than incised.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Nine held over death of reporter

Four women and five men were arrested in Dublin yesterday by Irish police investigating the murder in June last year of the journalist Veronica Guerin. They were being questioned about possible links with a drugs gang thought to be responsible for her murder.

Irish police have sent a file to the Director of Public Prosecutions about a former junior minister arrested in connection with the laundering of money belonging to a Dublin drugs gang.

Fatal bus crash

The driver of a minibus carrying young Scots was killed in a crash south of Clermont-Ferrand, France. Ten passengers, all from Glasgow, were slightly hurt. The cause of the crash, in which James Spencer, 22, died, was unclear.

£48,000 for poster

A poster for the 1942 film *Casablanca* was sold for £48,800 at Sotheby's, a British auction record for a film poster. The two-metre-square sheet, one of two known to exist, was bought by Andrew Cohen, head of the houseware retailer Betterware.

TV star on track

Michael Palin, star of BBC's *Full Circle*, had a train named after him at Darsham station, Suffolk. Palin unveiled his nameplate on an Anglia Railways Class 153 train. He is patron of the environmental group Transport 2000.

Fallen hero

A man on a sponsored parachute jump to raise money for a hospital finished the day as a patient there, after breaking his ankle. John Ryder, 36, was fundraising for the children's ward at West Suffolk Hospital, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

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Milk bottles rescue girl from life on drugs

Lin Jenkins reports on the first success for a scheme that brings photographs of missing people on to the shelves of supermarkets

A TEENAGE runaway was rescued from a life of heroin addiction on the streets after her photograph was printed on 75,000 milk bottles. Several shoppers telephoned police to say that they had seen Kirsty McFadden, thin, bedraggled and ill, begging in Bristol.

Begging had earned her up to £100 a day, but most was spent on heroin for her and her boyfriend and her weight had fallen to 5½ stone. Now, a year after leaving home, the 16-year-old has been reunited with her family and is back home in Newton Abbot, Devon, recovering slowly from her addiction.

Miss McFadden was the seventh missing person to be featured on milk bottles sold by Iceland, and was the first of them to be found. Police and social services launched a wide hunt when she failed to return from school to her foster parents, with whom she had been living after running away from home on previous occasions. It was thought that she was travelling the country with a circus or funfair, but the reality was grimmer. She slid into drug addiction, begging and living in cardboard boxes.

The National Missing Per-

sons Helpline was contacted and Miss McFadden was chosen for the Iceland scheme, which was launched in April. Her photograph was printed on four-pint containers of milk.

She was picked up by police after customers realised that the face on their milk bottles was that of the bedraggled girl who begged in the Broadmead shopping centre.

Miss McFadden said: "I am very glad that I was found. I ran away because I was fed up with the social workers, and at first it was all right. It was a bit of an adventure. For the first two months I was living in a squat, but after that I was living on the street."

"It just dragged on and dragged on. I was too scared to go home because of the people I was with. I was making about £100 a day begging in Broadmead, but I was spending it all on heroin for myself and my boyfriend."

"I don't know what would have happened to me if I had stayed on the streets. I am very grateful to the people who put me on the milk bottles and the people who called the police."

She said that she had given up heroin and was regaining her health. "When you have a heroin addiction you do not



Kirsty McFadden with her mother, brother and sister. Her photograph was printed on 75,000 milk bottles, right, sold by Iceland

eat and, when I was picked up, I weighed only 5½ stone, but I am almost up to 7 stone now." She hopes to make up for the schooling she missed by studying at a college in Torquay.

Her mother, Cheryl, 36,

said that she and her husband, Cliff, had "tried everything to find her and are so pleased that this milk bottle scheme has worked. She had run away before and come home again, but after she had been missing for a few weeks

we really began to worry about her and it got worse and worse the longer she was away."

"Every night Cliff and I would lie awake in bed wondering where she was and what she was doing and

worrying that she might be dead in a ditch somewhere."

Her parents were disappointed that Kirsty chose to stay in a children's home when she was first found, but later she rang to say that she wished to come home. "I was

horrified when I saw her," Mrs McFadden said. "She was a bag of bones and her skin looked as if it was stretched like clingfilm. Now she is eating like a horse and putting on weight again."

A spokesman for the Nat-

ional Missing Persons Helpline said: "Each picture runs for three weeks and this is our first success. We had hoped the others would have been found as well because we picked especially vulnerable missing people for the scheme."

Lorna Webster of Iceland said that the milk containers with Miss McFadden's photograph had been sold throughout the country. She added: "We are delighted at this success and thrilled that the family has been reunited. We hope some of the other missing people we feature will also get in touch with their parents."

RSPCA used gene test to track badger killers

By Russell Jenkins

FOUR men accused of killing a badger after digging it from its sett were linked to the crime by DNA tests on the animal's body, a court was told yesterday.

Magistrates in Bakewell, Derbyshire, were told that it was the first time genetic profiling had been relied upon by the RSPCA in such a case. Blood found on one of the men's clothing and on another's knife was matched with tissue taken from a dead badger, it was alleged.

All four denied killing and digging for a badger and interfering with a badger set at Cromford Moor in Derbyshire. The accused are Gary Shaw, 26, of Matlock; Russell Pentecost, 37, of Aldersley; David Wragg, 32, of Belper; and Michael Holland, 32, of Chaddean, all in Derbyshire.

John Sutcliffe, prosecuting for the RSPCA, told the court

that the men were stopped by police after they had been alerted by members of the Mid-Derbyshire Badger Group. Two members of the group had seen men with dogs, similar to the four accused, near a badger sett, where the freshly killed body of a fully grown male badger was found in March last year.

Mr Sutcliffe said evidence against the men, who had claimed that they had been looking for foxes and had a dead fox with them, was only circumstantial until the "dramatic development" of DNA tests on the animal and on the bloodstains on the knife found on Mr Wragg and on a blue overcoat worn by Mr Holland.

He said that Terry Burke, a zoologist of Leicester University, who had been researching the use of DNA profiling in wild animal studies since 1985, carried out tests which were not only able to identify

DNA from badgers as opposed to other animals but could distinguish one badger from another.

Tests showed that bodily fluids or tissue from a badger were present on the boiler suit and knife and that the DNA profile of the dead badger matched that of blood on the knife and the suit, he said.

Mr Sutcliffe said the tests had directly linked Mr Wragg and Mr Holland to the crime and although there was no direct evidence against the other two accused, they had clearly gone to the sett as part of a joint venture.

The RSPCA believes that the technique may be useful in the fight to save threatened species around the world, including gorillas. DNA evidence has already been used to determine whether exotic birds have been illegally taken from the wild.

The trial continues.

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Barracks provides home for museum

By Audrey Magee
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

A FORMER British barracks became the new home of the National Museum of Ireland yesterday.

The country's history, from Mesolithic to the present day, had been squeezed into cramped premises on Kildare Street, Dublin, since 1815. The new museum is in Collins Barracks, named after Michael Collins, a founding father of the IRA.

The museum spent 70 years looking for more spacious premises and will now be able to display thousands of artefacts that had been held in storage, including a collection of Irish silver not seen in 50 years. The barracks, which was completed in 1706, was formerly known as the Royal Barracks. It was officially handed over in 1922.

Near the River Liffey on the outskirts of Dublin city centre the building was occupied by the Irish Army until 1994 when plans were initiated to turn it into a museum. About 30 soldiers still occupy the 19-acre site but will leave as the £48 million museum expansion plan is completed. The museum, of which the first phase is completed, houses a wide range of decorative and applied arts, while Irish archaeology remains in Kildare Street.

Bertie Ahern, the Irish Prime Minister, was to have opened the museum but stayed away as curatorial staff picketed outside in protest at their lack of promotion.

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Macho adverts blamed for road pollution

THE motor industry was attacked yesterday over links between pollution and the macho culture of big high-performance cars. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution said that technology could deliver cars 40 per cent more fuel efficient and less damaging to the environment.

A commission report decried the advertising of cars which put engine size, luxury and acceleration over protecting public health. One member, Clair Chilvers, Professor of Epidemiology at Nottingham University, said a campaign was needed to make small, less gas-guzzling cars "more sexy".

Peter Doyle, another member and executive director of the pharmaceutical and agrochemical company Zeneca, said: "The current emphasis of motor industry advertising is taking us in the opposite direction to environmental sustainability."

The fashion for larger-engined cars and four-wheel-drive vehicles highlighted a cultural crisis. The commission said that few people used four-wheel-drives off the road, and the safety claims for smaller vehicles were nonsense.

The Government was urged to hold talks with the industry, to see how advertising could be modified. Roland Clift, director of the Centre for Environmental Strategy at the University of Surrey, said advertising campaigns should also try to change driving habits: "Most of the fuel consumption, 50 to 60 per cent, is taken up by aerodynamic drag. If you halve your speed, you save 25 per cent of the fuel. You also reduce accidents."

It is three years since the

Nick Nuttall and Kevin Eason report on calls for dearer fuel and 'sexier' small cars

royal commission's first report on transport. For the commission to revisit a subject is unprecedented. Its chairman, Sir John Houghton, former chief executive of the Meteorological Office, said transport represented the biggest environmental challenge of the age. "There have been large shifts in attitudes and policy, and there is much talk of the right kind. There remains the problem of translating talk into action."

The commission hopes that its recommendations will form part of a White Paper on transport. It says that lorries should need a permit - at a price - to use motorways, to better reflect their environmental impacts and costs in terms of damage to highways. Other measures include a ten-year fuel price rise, above the Government's current escalator of 5 per cent above inflation, to reduce car usage. Current increases were being undermined by a fall in underlying fuel prices.

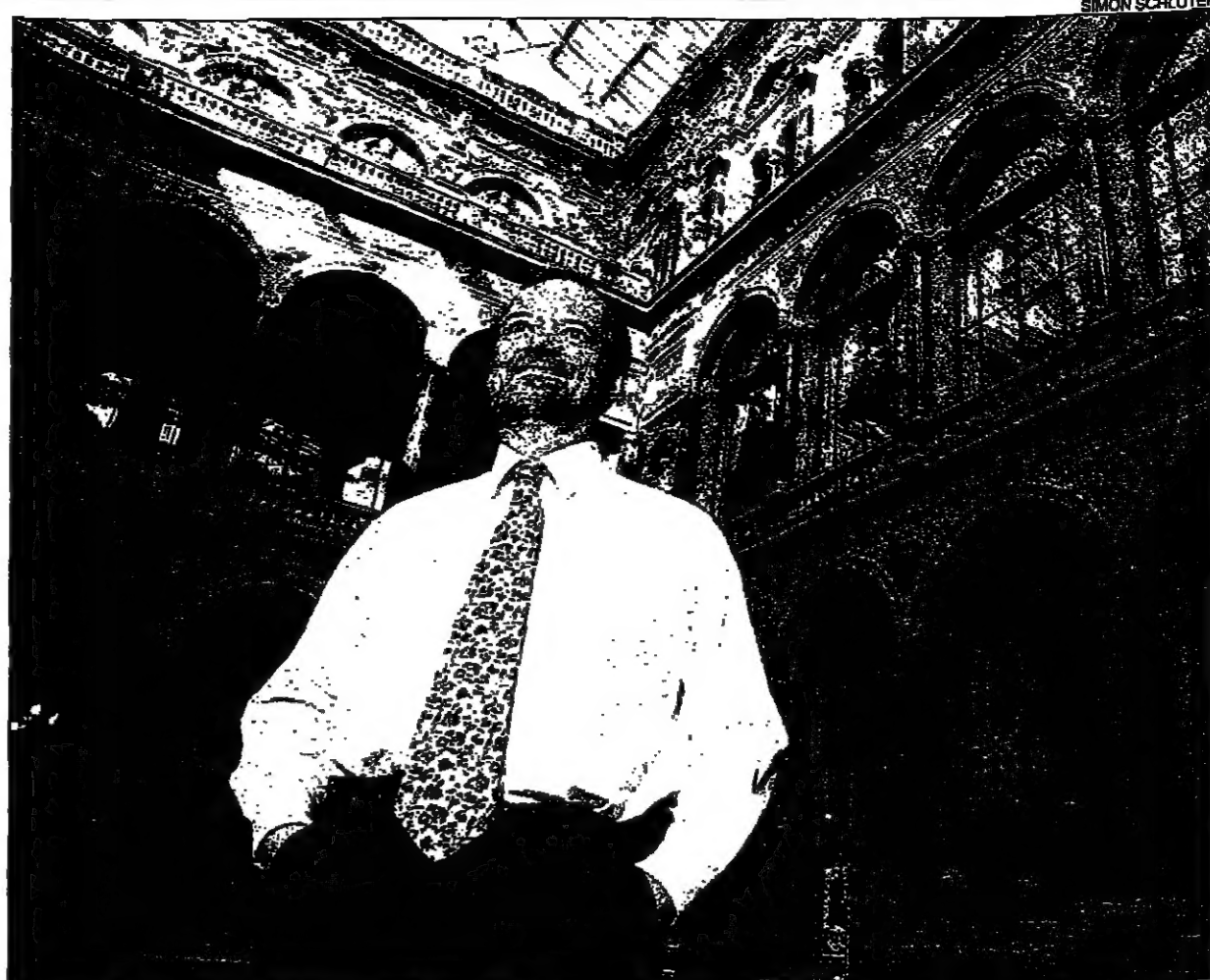
Other key recommendations include proper planning to deliver an integrated transport system linking the car with buses, light rail, walking and cycling, and a sliding scale vehicle excise duty making it far cheaper to run a small, fuel-efficient car.

Tighter limits on emissions

from new vehicles, which come into effect from 2000, would be followed by even tighter limits from 2005, despite industry resistance. Cleaner fuels, able to reduce emissions such as sulphur, would be given more help.

Councils would be able to charge for road use and non-residential private parking, using the money on integrated transport system. Urban areas and suburbs would no longer be designed in ways that enforce dependence on cars.

Car makers reacted angrily to criticisms, saying that they had poured billions of pounds into clean technology which had cut exhaust emissions by 30 per cent in five years, and said that ultimate responsibility for pollution rested with thousands of motorists who refused to service or maintain their cars. Ten per cent of cars cause half the pollution, according to RAC figures.



Robin Cook at the Foreign Office yesterday. He hopes its historic open day will present an "unstuffy" image

Foreign Office dons new school tie

By MICHAEL BINYON

ALMOST 1,000 schoolchildren, students, teachers and careers officers will today visit the Foreign Office, watch diplomats poring over telegrams and dispatches and help Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, to inaugurate a British Consulate in Ekaterinburg via a television link to the central Russian city.

The Foreign Office is throwing open its doors for the first time on a normal working weekday to show that it is no longer dominated by the old boys of a few public schools. Under "new" Labour, the new Foreign Office is redoubling efforts to encourage applications from women, ethnic minorities and graduates of provincial universities.

"Many people have no idea that the FCO is staffed by down-to-earth, unstuffy people," Mr Cook said. "I want it to represent all the communities of Britain."

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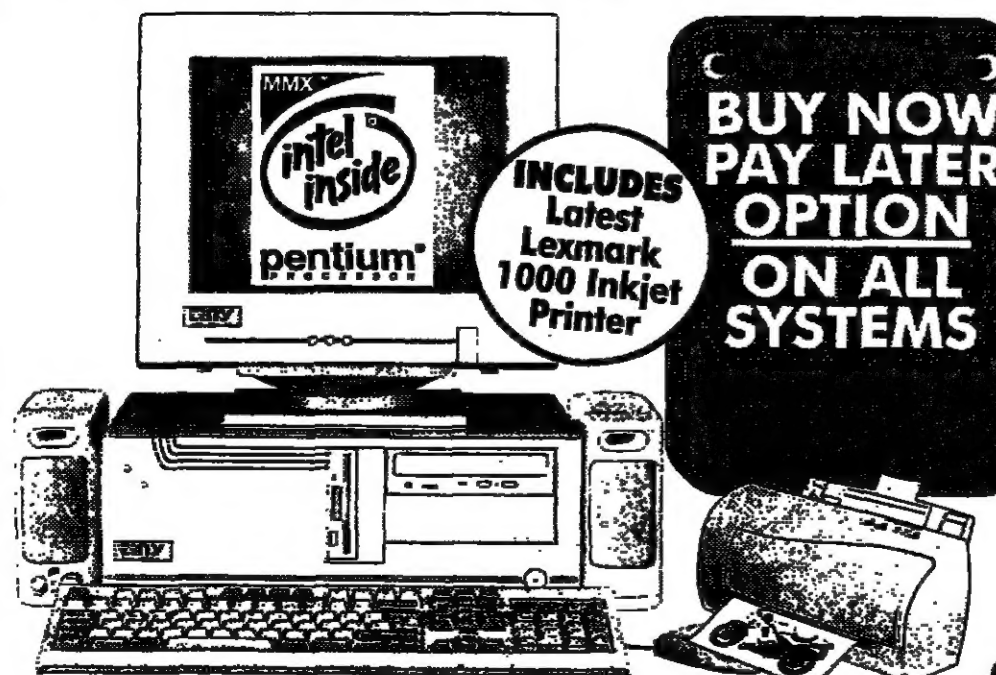


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OPENS THIS SATURDAY IN STOKE

CHANGE IN THE AIR FROM FUEL CELLS

A BRITISH company is set to make engines for cars and taxis whose only emission from the exhaust pipe will be water vapour. Zevco has made a prototype fuel-cell vehicle for postal services in Italy, and is talking to taxi operators in London because its engines provide similar performance and range to diesel engines, although they are fuelled by hydrogen. Production will start at a £2 million factory near Thanet, Kent, aimed at full output in two years, targeting commercial vehicles first. Nick Abson,

the chief executive, said: "The motor industry must move to new technology. The reason the big carmakers don't move to fuel cells is because they have so much invested in current technologies." Fuel cells are used extensively in the space industry. The electrochemical system powers electric motors silently and cleanly. Zevco says that gas companies can provide hydrogen, making the cells feasible. Swapping diesel engines to fuel cells and batteries costs £3,000 to £4,000.

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Attacks force Hindley portrait to be removed

By DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

THE controversial portrait of the Moors murderer Myra Hindley in the Royal Academy of Arts' *Sensation* exhibition has had to be removed from display after being attacked and damaged by two protesters when the show opened yesterday.

The painting, Marcus Harvey's *Myra*, which could take up to a week to restore, was withdrawn from the exhibition temporarily last night as experts assessed the damage.

The first incident occurred when a man walked into the gallery with two small canisters containing red and blue Indian ink. He threw them at the portrait and was arrested. About an hour later, a second man was taken into custody after four eggs were thrown. "We hope to return the painting to the exhibition within a week. It depends entirely on the assessment provided by our conservators," a spokeswoman said.

Three callers to the children's charity Kidscape had earlier offered to attack the

painting. Winnie Johnson, the mother of Moors victim Keith Bennett, said the attacks were "brilliant and they should do it every day. I'm thrilled to bits it's happened and I'm hoping they will have to take it down."

Earlier Mrs Johnson, who was among protesters outside the venue, insisted the 9ft by 11ft picture of Hindley, formed by using child handprints, should be removed. "It is criminal and it is disgusting. She [Hindley] is not a person. She is a monster."

Her son was 12 when he went missing 33 years ago. His body has never been found. Hindley has admitted that she and her accomplice, Ian Brady, killed him.

The academy sent out tea and sandwiches to Mrs Johnson and other protesters and offered her the chance to be shown around the exhibition by David Gordon, the secretary. Mrs Johnson refused.

Earlier, the Metropolitan Police Vice Squad investigated works depicting rotting animal carcasses and mutilated



The portrait Myra, by Marcus Harvey

bodies after a complaint from a woman whose child was murdered by a paedophile. Inspector Ron Holmes said he was satisfied that there was a warning notice about the Chapman brothers' mutant mannequins with genitalia for facial features. "I don't think it warrants prosecution."

Another member of the academy, Gillian Ayres, 67, resigned in protest at the Hindley portrait. "I'm a mother. Feelings matter very

much," she said. "Life comes first. My sympathy is with the parents."

James Robinson, the academy's deputy secretary, said he regretted her decision, but added: "We've had loads of letters from academicians. Not all are against it."

Protesters outside the show included members of Mothers Against Murder and Aggression. Using a loudhailer, they urged visitors not to "waste £7 on a ticket."

One protester, Mandy Silvester, said the exhibition was a glorification of violence: "Myra Hindley's portrait would not be in there today if she hadn't killed those children. Maybe art does have a right to offend, but when a child is murdered the families of those children never live a normal life again."

Among yesterday's visitors, the actor and singer Ian Dury said it was clearly not intended to be about pleasure. Some 200,000 people are expected to visit the exhibition over the next few weeks.

Letters, page 19



Winnie Johnson, mother of one of the Moors murderers' victims, protesting outside the exhibition yesterday

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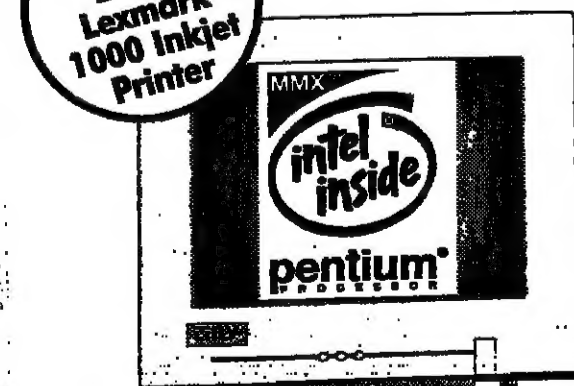
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Armed Forces unlikely to face further cuts

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Government is not expecting to reap a further peace dividend from the current strategic defence review, George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, indicated yesterday.

The review will not be completed until next January, but Mr Robertson said it was already clear that the Armed Forces must retain the capability to operate in all types of military activity, from high-intensity warfare to peace-keeping and humanitarian missions.

In a mid-review speech to the Royal United Services Institute in London, Mr Robertson said he was not going to speculate on "force structures or numbers or types of equipment for the future".

However, he said that if Britain was to continue playing a role in high-intensity conflicts and international security operations, "that could well require a demanding range and scale of capabilities".

Mr Robertson said: "It is now nearly ten years since the effective end of the Cold War, and we have already reaped a substantial peace dividend."

Since 1990, the strength of

the Armed Forces had been reduced from 315,000 to 215,000, some 32 per cent. The number of conventionally armed submarines had fallen from 28 to 12; the number of destroyers and frigates from 48 to 35; infantry battalions from 55 to 40; the number of tanks cut by 45 per cent, and aircraft by some 30 per cent.

He said: "The previous Tory Government argued that they had maintained strong defences. In truth, in many areas they left the Armed Forces with serious problems."

He added: "Our increased operational commitments since the end of the Cold War have demonstrated that many British defence areas are suffering from severe overstretch."

He said the next stage of the review would ask whether "we have the right capabilities, either now or planned, and whether we correctly interpreted what technology will offer".

The review would also focus in detail on the missions for Britain's Armed Forces, the scale and level of deployments and "how we should modernise our force structures and capabilities".

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REMEMBER-ARTHRITIS RESPECTS NOBODY



Palm tells future for detectives

DETECTIVES are to use palm reading to catch criminals in Cambridge-shire (Stewart Tendler writes). The first computerised system for storing palm prints was unveiled by the force yesterday. Police say palm prints are an under-used asset: they are as unique as fingerprints, although fingerprints are used more because they are more widely found. Trials of the £30,000 system, starting with 500 prints, resulted in 12 arrests.

CHILDREN are losing themselves in a world of evil foreigners, big-chested women and the need to prove themselves through violence, says an academic study. They are spending too long playing fantasy video games.

The games are being taken more seriously than many adults realise, says Dr Ken Parsons, a senior sociology lecturer at the Manchester Metropolitan University. "Playing a game can be, and more often than not is, a serious undertaking — on its outcome rests their feelings of self-esteem and competence."

"To put it in adult terms, playing a game is a child's true reality — this makes it beyond the boundaries of its meaning for adults. In this sense, there is a danger that children and young people may become addicted to sex, addicted to sexism, addicted to violence."

In a sample of 61 teenagers — 36 boys and 25 girls aged 13 to 16 — questioned at youth clubs in Crewe and Dundee, about a quarter feared they were becoming addicted to the

It is a world of fantasy aggression and impossibly shaped women, but a study warns that children take it seriously. Russell Jenkins reports

games, with about 10 per cent spending more than 30 hours a week in front of the computer screen. One in 20 said they could not live without constant gratification of "beat 'em up" computer games, such as *Street Fighter* and *Duke Nukem 3D*.

The video-fantasy girl, Lara Croft, who stars in PlayStation's *Tomb Raider*, had become a craze among impressionable adolescents as a "sex symbol with attitude". Dr Parsons said: "These games encourage sexism and condition children to view the world in a way that they see on a computer screen."

"Men are never rescued by women. Themes of female sex symbols, female kidnapping, female rescue and submission

pervade many children's experiences."

He identified three kinds of game: fantasies such as *Zelda 3* and *Dungeon Keeper*, brain teasers such as *Super Mario Brothers*, and blaster games such as *Interstellar Assault*, *Killer Instinct* and *Fighters Megamix*. The games chiefly feature terrorists, prizefighters, police teams and robotic detectives. Foreigners were invariably baddies and women were acted upon rather than initiating action, said Dr Parsons.

The study found that a third of parents — who generally pay for the games, costing up to £45 each — are concerned that their children lack physical fitness, and 10 per cent expressed concern at the anti-social behaviour that such

games encouraged. A third of the teenagers had been encouraged by their families to reduce their playing time, one in five had experienced physical strain through playing too much, and 26 per cent admitted they were "too attached" to games and found it difficult to stop playing.

The software in which Lara Croft stars is a bestseller, grossing more than £1 million in the first six months after its launch in October 1996. Dr Parsons describes her as a "gun-wielding baddie-blasting sex symbol, whose very large breasts are designed to be out of proportion with the rest of her body."

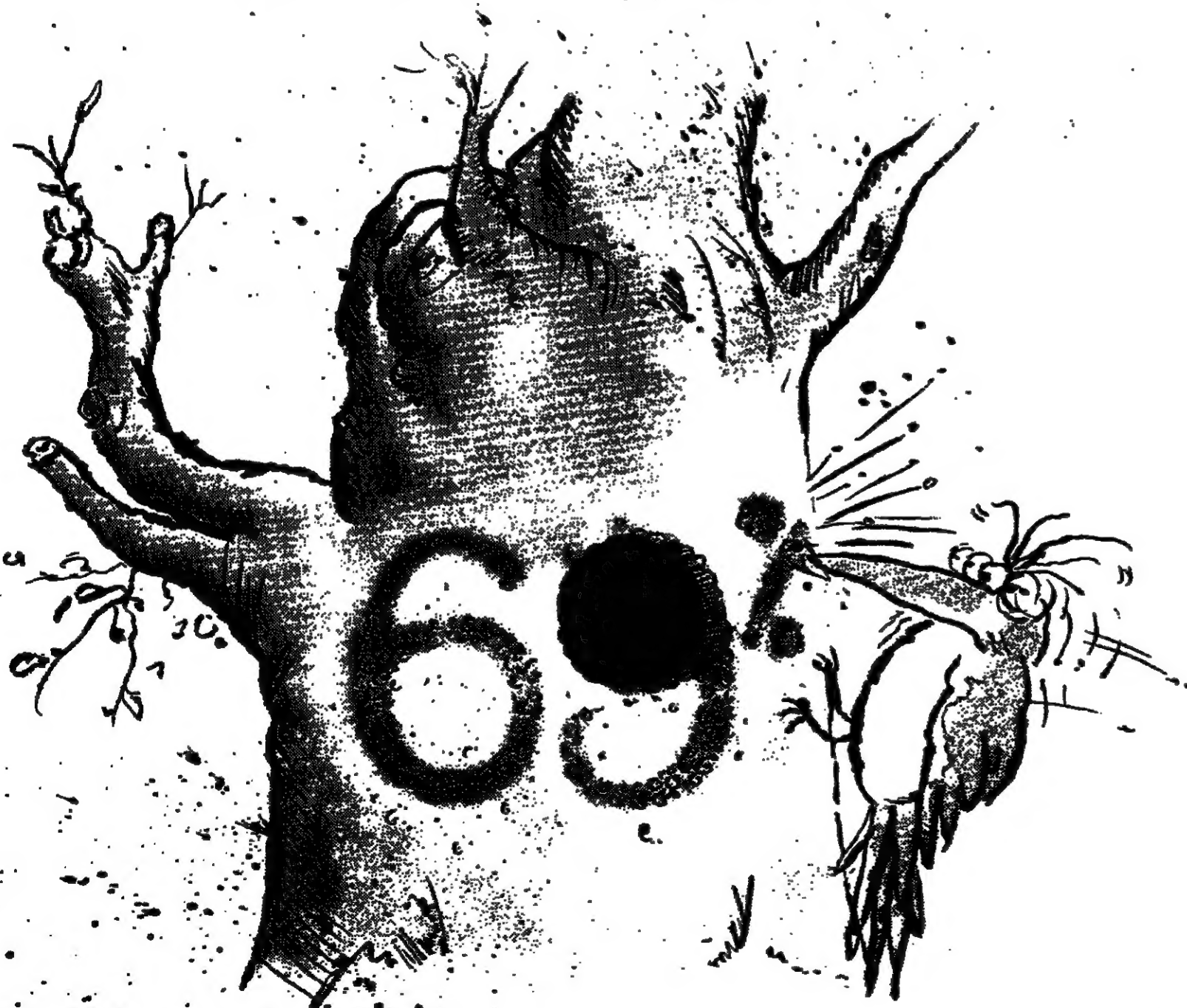
Her female competition includes Q-Bee, a bee woman, who is advertised as being "sexy in her ultra-cute costume".

Lara Croft's pin-up picture has appeared as a centrefold in *Loaded* magazine. The character has a spawned a television series and a record, and it has been rumoured that a secret room exists within the game where the player can peel away her clothes.



The actress Rhona Mitra as Lara Croft at the launch of a computer game

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Teenagers in North take most drugs

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

YOUNG people in the North and the Midlands are increasingly turning to drugs, while in London and the South the practice is in decline, according to a Home Office study published today.

Among the trend-setting 16 to 19-year-olds, the North now has a higher level of drug abuse than London, a reversal of the position three years ago. The study even suggests that the fashion for dance drugs, such as Ecstasy, may be in decline in London and the South.

Overall, in England and Wales, the level of drug misuse stabilised between 1994 and 1996, although it is too early to suggest that this is anything other than a pause before abuse rises again.

Almost half of young people in England and Wales aged 16 to 29 claimed to have taken an illegal drug at some time in their lives, but more recent consumption was much lower, according to results from the 1996 British Crime Survey.

About one in four had taken an illegal drug in the past 12 months and one in seven in the past month, the study, conducted in 1993-1994 and again in 1995-1996, found. In 1994, 23 per cent of 16 to 29-year-olds had taken an illegal drug in the past year.

Cannabis is the most commonly used drug, followed by amphetamines and LSD. But

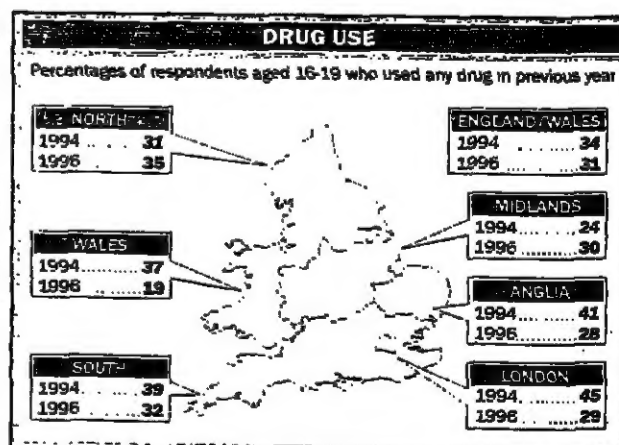
Ecstasy is the least popular of the hallucinogenic drugs, with only 9 per cent of 16 to 29-year-olds ever taking it.

George Howarth, a Home Office Minister, said that, though the figures remained worryingly high, the overall results of the study challenged the notion that drug misuse was escalating out of control. "We have to remember that, for most young people, drug-taking is not part of their normal behaviour and that just one in seven had taken a drug in the last month."

He added that, for many young people, taking drugs was an isolated experience or something they grew out of, and that the Government was acting to help more of them to make sensible decisions.

But while the study of 11,000 people aged 16 to 59 highlights relatively stable levels of drug misuse in England and Wales, it found clear regional differences between the North and Midlands and the South. The North has the highest rates of all regions, both for the taking of any drug and dance drugs in 1996, when two years earlier it was below the national average.

The study found that 26 per cent of 16 to 29-year-olds in the North and 19 per cent in the Midlands used a drug in the past year, compared with 22 per cent and 16 per cent respectively in 1994.



SNP organisers face the music

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

FORGET the power dressing of Labour conferences. Capes and wellington boots are called for at the annual gathering of Scottish nationalists on the Isle of Bute, in the Firth of Clyde, next week.

An accommodation shortage in the main town of Rothesay, caused by a clash with Bute's International Country Music Festival, has condemned an unlucky few SNP delegates to a rainy week in a caravan or under canvas.

About 1,000 party members are expected to arrive on the island next Wednesday, followed on Friday by 700 country music fans. But with only 27 hotels and a dozen guesthouses in the town, amounting to about 800 beds, there is not a bed to be had.

The SNP has advertised in *The Scotsman* for local people willing to open their homes and more than 50 have responded, some offering rooms free of charge. But some party members may have to bed down in a Scout hall or brave the forecast September rain in a field made available by the council.

Careful to book early, Alex Salmond, SNP leader, has an hotel room, as do the SNP HQ staff, most of whom are staying in the Victoria Hotel.

Gerry Chambers, an SNP member on Bute who is helping to arrange emergency accommodation, said: "We advised delegates to book early. Most people took our advice but we still have about a dozen delegates looking for beds."

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FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

WORKING on the principle that America's heart can be reached through its stomach, the CIA has produced a commemorative cookbook of covert recipes designed to give the persecuted spy agency greater public appeal on its 50th anniversary.

At bookshops throughout the United States next week, readers will be able to peruse *Spies, Black Ties and Mango Pies*, a pot-pourri of culinary delights from former agents and their spouses, including Barbara Bush and the wives of eight other former CIA directors as well as Stephanie Glakas-Temet, wife of the incumbent.

Cooking was one of the few topics considered permissible at the dinner tables of the agency's extended empire. "Food and cooking, along with my family, allowed me to cope with and even enjoy my strange world," writes Kay Shaw Nelson, a cookbook author and former CIA agent.

Some of the recipes show the resourceful nature of spymasters' wives. Apple and cabbage salad, and coleslaw soufflé, were created by CIA families in Moscow when local shops carried little other than the vegetable. There is even a formula for dog biscuits and directions, as follows, for snake soup. "Catch a cobra. Cut off its head and remove the skin and internal organs. Chop the body into 2-inch pieces. Put pieces in a

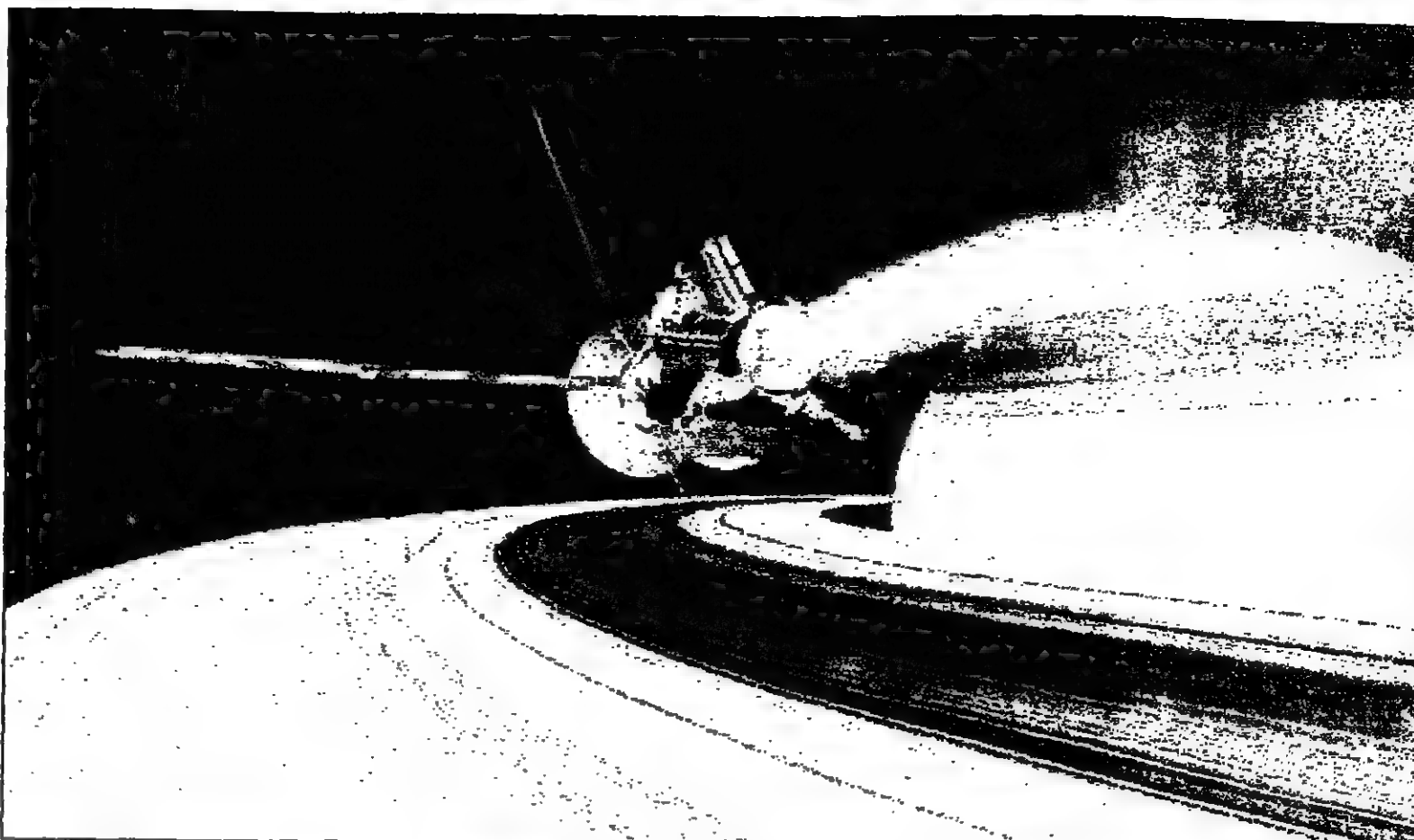
large pot with half a gallon of water and boil for 45 minutes. Add monosodium glutamate and salt and boil for 30 minutes. Serve hot."

Recipes also include accompanying tales of derring-do. Exotic swordfish in marinade recalls a group of agents being tailed as they sought a restaurant in a communist country. Eventually the tails helped them to find it.

Mrs Bush, who lived in China when her husband was head of the US Liaison Office in Beijing, remembers the terrors of the Chinese sea slug. "Whenever we had Chinese guests, our chef insisted we serve them," she writes. "To add insult to injury, sea slugs cost \$25 a pound. When we served them at banquets, we bit the bullet and ate them."

Most of the more than 100 contributing cooks have kept their last names secret, an ironic twist at a time when the agency has been desperate to forget the clandestine horrors of its past. But some authors, who submitted their names to the CIA's publications review office, felt it necessary to conceal their identity. "If people in foreign embassies go through and read the stories," explained Barbara X. "they'll know so and so must have been working for the agency. We didn't want to make horribly crystal-clear where we were."

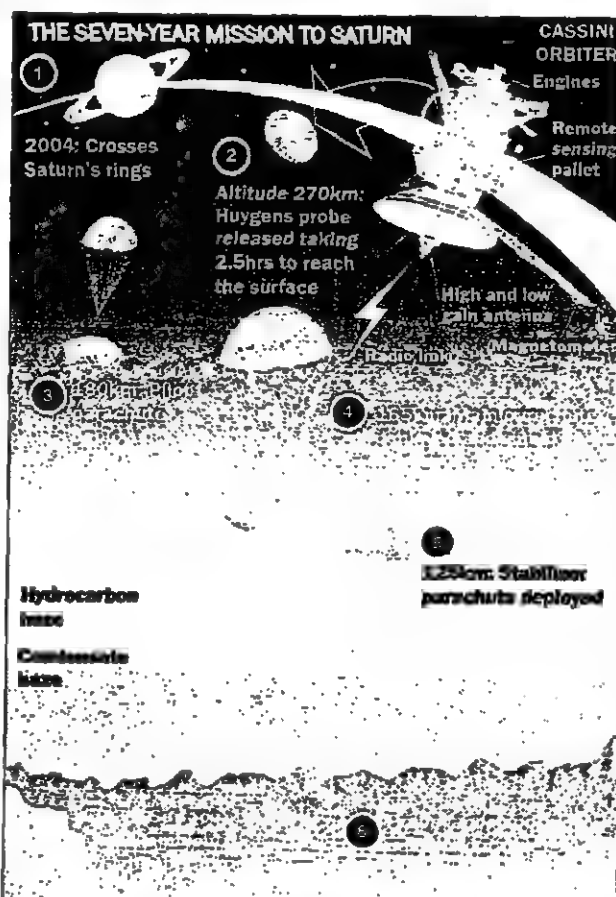
Leading article, page 19



An artist's impression of the probe when it approaches Saturn. It is not expected to get there until 2004 and then begins a four-year orbit

Biggest space probe ready for £2bn voyage to Saturn

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR



THE century's last great planetary probe — and the biggest spacecraft to be sent to the outer solar system — is ready for launch at Cape Canaveral.

British scientists have a big share in Cassini-Huygens, a project that has occupied 4,000 people for the past six years, and will have cost £2.2 billion when it reaches Saturn in 2004. Eleven laboratories have contributed to experiments on the ringed planet and its largest moon, Titan.

As big as a single-decker bus, Cassini-Huygens is the last great hurrah of the era of planetary exploration which began in the 1960s. Future missions will be cheaper and much quicker, but will not have the same capacity to gather information, said Professor David Southwood of Imperial College. "This is the only chance we'll get to go to Saturn in our lifetime."

The mission has two craft which will travel together. Cassini will go into a four-year orbit around Saturn, while the European-built Huygens probe will descend to the surface of Titan, which is almost as big as Mars.

Launch was delayed by a mishap when a cooling blower damaged insulation inside the Huygens probe. Yesterday British scientists said the launch was set for October 13.

There will be a long wait for results. "This is the most massive probe ever launched into deep space, and even with the most powerful rockets it can't go direct to Saturn," said Dr John Zarnecki, of the University of Kent. "We have to use fly-bys of other planets to gain speed."

Cassini-Huygens will make close passes of Venus in April 1998 and June 1999, the Earth in August 1999, and Jupiter in

December 2000. It will reach Saturn in June 2004 and will go into orbit around it.

Four months after entering orbit, Cassini will release Huygens, which will approach Titan at 12,000mph. Titan is the only moon in the solar system to have an atmosphere, and Huygens will slow down with parachutes designed by the Martin-Baker company, based near Uxbridge, Middlesex.

After seven years and a journey of more than two billion miles, the probe will have a maximum of half an hour of life to send back data.

Britain is to spend £36 million — 1.5 per cent of the total cost — on the mission. Teams from nine British universities, the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory and the Institute of Oceanographic Sciences are involved with experiments.

WORLD SUMMARY

Blast kills island miners

Longyearbyen: A powerful explosion killed 23 Russians and Ukrainians working in a coal mine on the remote Norwegian Svalbard Islands, officials said.

The victims were Russians and Ukrainians working in a mine in Barentsburg, 30 miles west of Longyearbyen, the district capital of the Svalbards.

The islands, 400 miles north of the mainland, have several Russian coal-mining settlements, allowed under a 1920 treaty. The cause of the blast was not known. At least 34 people survived. (AP)

Public execution

Moscow: A Chechen firing squad has executed two men in front of a crowd of several thousand people in the Square of the Friendship of the Peoples in Grozny (Robin Lodge writes). It was the second public execution this month and was carried out in defiance of Moscow's protests. The two were convicted by a Sharia (Islamic) court of murdering a mother and her two children during a robbery.

Contest chaos

New York: The Rev Al Sharpton, the black Democrat fighting for his party's nomination for November's mayoral election here, vowed to "fight in court" after a chaotic recount of absentee voters knocked him out of the run-off next week (Tunku Varadarajan writes). Ruth Messinger, his rival, had originally been credited with 39.9 per cent of the vote, but her tally was later put at a winning 41.16 per cent.

Crooner dies

Nice: Georges Guétary, the French crooner whose 60-year career included a major Hollywood role with Gene Kelly in *An American in Paris*, has died aged 82. He was born Lambros Worlou to a Greek family in the Egyptian city of Alexandria. (Reuters)

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Germans see crowning glory of revamped Reichstag

THE German Government has played down harmful comments by Klaus Kinkel, the Foreign Minister, about the single European currency before the Franco-German summit, which began in the state of Thuringia yesterday afternoon.

Officials from the Foreign and Finance Ministries were quick to "clarify" that Germany had not relaxed its commitment to reaching the Maastricht treaty budget target, despite suggestions by Herr Kinkel that economic and monetary union (EMU) would begin regardless of deficit levels.

In an interview with a German radio station, Herr Kinkel seemed to imply that EMU would happen even if Germany and France had not reached the 3 per cent target set by the treaty, just as Bonn and Paris were both emphasising that the single currency would start exactly as planned. His comments were broadcast as the Bundesbank and the French Government confirmed that the euro would be launched on time.

It is not the first time Herr Kinkel has strayed from the party line on EMU budget deficits. On the last occasion he received a public knuckle-

But Herr Kohl, who is trying to convince a sceptical public in an election year to give up the mark, will be keen to smooth over problems within his Christian Democrat-Free Democrat (CDU-FDP) coalition for the 70th biennial Franco-German summit, being held in the town of Weimar.

Herr Kohl and Lionel Jospin, France's Prime Minister, are said to have patched up differences over Europe and both are eager to discuss EMU. It is the first time the summit has been held in the old Communist east, but is

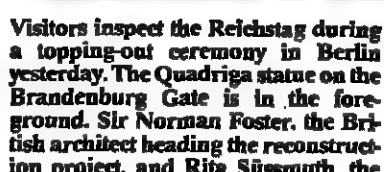


expected to be fairly low-key, as finance ministers from both sides are attending the International Monetary Fund annual meeting in Hong Kong.

President Chirac and leading Cabinet ministers will also attend the two-day talks, which will cover eastward expansion of the European Union (EU), a proposed European jobs summit in November, and Germany's demand for a reduction in its EU budget contributions.

As discussions got under way, a poll, conducted by the Bavarian Wickert Institutes, revealed that nearly three out of four Germans fear the euro will be weaker than the mark. Only 17 per cent of the 970 interviewed did not share such views and 42 per cent said they were not well enough informed to voice an opinion.

The Finance Ministry denied there was any truth in rumours circulating in foreign exchange markets that Herr Waigel has resigned. A spokeswoman said it was "nonsense" to suggest he had quit following criticism by the chairman of the CDU in the Saar region, Peter Müller. Herr Müller said Herr Waigel's mismanagement of the economy would cost the Christian Democrats the general election next September.



president of the Bundestag, the lower house of the German parliament, celebrated together, below, before a new cupola, trimmed with garlands

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Moscow: President Yeltsin yesterday said Russia might be willing to compromise with Japan over the Kurile Islands, when he urged "joint development" of the territory, disputed for a half-century (Richard Beeston writes).

Mr Yeltsin said in the southern town of Orjol he was

persuaded that the problem would be resolved after the turn of the century by a younger generation.

Mr Yeltsin clearly hopes to break the deadlock when he meets Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, next month in Krasnoyarsk. The Kuriles are among Russia's

sia's most neglected areas and Japanese investment could be the key to their future. Mr. Yeltsin may have been influenced by Aleksandr Lebed, his former National Security Adviser, who in Japan this week suggested a 20-year handover of the Kuriles and a referendum.

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Violence likely as settler deal is spurned

By Christopher Walker

Menachem Porush, has broken a decades-long silence to confirm that authorities snatched hundreds of babies from Yemeni Jewish immigrants nearly 50 years ago and gave them to European-born Jews for adoption. (Reuters)

Police sealed off all roads leading to the area close to the central Tahrir Square, the site of earlier attacks against foreigners. An Indian businessman with an office close to the

An Egyptian official in the burnt-out wreckage of the Cairo bus. Terrorists shot at passengers before petrol bombs were thrown. Six of the dead were German tourists

FROM EMAD MEKAY IN CAIRO

Ozias, who watched the attack from a third-floor window overlooking the scene. "As I rushed to the window to see what had happened another explosion followed and the front of the bus was already in flames. All the

Mr Ozlab said: "They (the

At least three other buses were riddled with bullet holes. One bullet neatly punctured the glass above a driver's seat, where he had placed a Koran in the window.

Menachem Porush, has broken a decades-long silence to confirm that authorities snatched hundreds of babies from Yemeni Jewish immigrants nearly 50 years ago and gave them to European-born Jews for adoption. (Reuters)

an Iranian-style revolution, to boasts from senior Egyptian security officials that they had been defeated and driven to marginal areas of Upper Egypt 250 miles from the capital. Three days earlier, a court convicted 72 militants of

Tahrir

Cairo Tower
Cotton Museum
Tahrir Square
Arab League
British Embassy
National Assembly

Half mile

Leading article, page 15

and the front of the bus was already in flames. All the

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where he had placed a Koran in the window.

gave them to European-born Jews for adoption. (Reuters)

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Ugandan cult rebels 'use children as sex slaves'

THOUSANDS of children from northern Uganda are being forced to take up arms and serve as sexual slaves by a rebel group which aims to rule Uganda according to the Ten Commandments.

Most of those abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and turned into child soldiers are aged between 13 and 16. The children, say two newly published human rights reports, are made to take part in combat, act as personal servants and, in the case of girls, to serve as "wives" to rebel commanders.

Between 5,000 and 8,000 children have been conscripted in the past three years, according to Amnesty International. In a report, *Breaking God's commands: the destruction of childhood by the Lord's Resistance Army*, the organisation says children are being tortured, murdered and trained by the LRA to fight government troops.

Amnesty's findings are corroborated by those of the New York-based Human Rights Watch, which claims that kid-

Rights groups say kidnapped teenagers must fight or die in the Lord's Resistance Army, reports David Orr

napped children are made to undergo brutal initiation ceremonies. These involve beating and hacking to death fellow child captives who had tried to escape.

Using testimony from children who have escaped, Amnesty paints a picture of abuse and trauma. Children who refuse to comply with rebel commands are starved, raped and whipped.

The commander gave us husbands, except for the young ones, those below 13," said one former child soldier. "But from 13 onwards, we were all given as wives. There was no marriage ceremony. If you refuse, you are killed."

The abduction of girls and their forced marriage to older LRA soldiers is the cornerstone of the movement's internal organisation, said Amnesty. Girls are allocated as a reward and incentive for male soldiers. "If a husband gets

tired of his wife, he gets rid of her and she is given to someone else," said a counsellor working with former child soldiers in Uganda. "Within a one-year period, girls would have seen many husbands."

Children who escape are often afraid to go home for fear of reprisals against themselves and their families, said Human Rights Watch. The conflict is believed to have displaced more than 200,000 Ugandans.

The LRA, which terrorises villages in northern Uganda, might be dismissed as a band of crazed eccentrics were it not for the havoc it sows. Bicycles are outlawed by the movement and those caught cycling have their feet hacked off. There are also reports of peasants having their ears or lips cut off.

A weird cultish belief dictates that all white animals, and all pigs, must be slaughtered. Farmers found working on Fridays — like Sunday — are deemed a day of rest — are

killed. The LRA, committed to the overthrow of the Government of President Museveni, is supported by the Islamic fundamentalist Government of Sudan. The movement has been receiving arms from Khartoum in return for helping in attacks against Sudanese People's Liberation Army rebels in southern Sudan.

Military sources in Uganda indicate, however, that Sudan has recently cut off supplies to its fighters back into Uganda. The LRA has its origins in the fragmentation of government forces after the 1986 overthrow of Milton Obote's dictatorial regime by President Museveni. Some die-hardards from the Acholi tribal area of the north took to the bush, where they joined the Holy Spirit Movement of the self-styled priestess, Alice Lakwena. After a period under the leadership of Lakwena's father, the movement was taken over by Joseph Kony, her cousin, who renamed it the Lord's Resistance Army in 1993.

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Museveni: guerrillas want to depose him



Doctors treat Azem Hajdari after he was shot by a fellow MP yesterday

Albanian MP shoots rival in parliament

By Richard Owen and James Pettifer

ALBANIA experienced its first serious political violence since the June election which brought the Socialists to power when a leading supporter of Sali Berisha, the ousted right-wing President, was shot and seriously wounded yesterday inside the parliament in Tirana.

Azem Hajdari was recovering in hospital after being shot by Gafur Mazreku, an MP from the ruling Socialists.

Mr Mazreku was no longer an MP but an "ordinary criminal", said Fatos Nano, the Prime Minister, adding that he would be relieved of his seat. The Socialist-dominated assembly voted to lift Mr Mazreku's parliamentary immunity so that he could be charged with the attempted murder of Mr Hajdari, who doctors said had been wounded in the lungs, legs and shoulders.

The two men had earlier come to blows in parliament during a debate on Tuesday on proposals by Arben Malaj, the Finance Minister, to raise value-added tax.

The roots of the shooting appear to lie rather deeper than a difference over economic policy, however. Ten-

sions have run high between Right and Left since Mr Nano, a political prisoner under Mr Berisha, became Prime Minister after the June elections. The elections brought to an end the Democratic Party's dominance of post-Communist Albania, and rightwingers have complained that the former Communists have since "persecuted" the defeated Right and stifled its voice by refusing it television time.

Mr Hajdari was a prominent student leader during the anti-Communist revolt in 1990-1991 led by Dr Berisha, the former heart surgeon who became President in 1992.

But suspicion of the former Communists and resentment of their cruelty when in power under the detested Enver Hoxha remained strong. Mr Hajdari, known for his fiery oratory and temperament, was notably tough in his dealings with the Socialists during his period as head of the parliamentary public order and security committee, which oversees the police and security services. Socialist demonstrations were broken up and left-wing leaders were detained and beaten.

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World Bank
signals boom
for China

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Jiang purges key 'liberal' rival for leadership

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

THE third most powerful man in the Chinese leadership, the secretive but seemingly liberal Qiao Shi, was dropped from the Central Committee of the Communist Party in a surprise move yesterday as President Jiang Zemin consolidated his position as party chief.

Mr Qiao, 72, who is chairman of China's parliament, the National People's Congress, and credited with making it less of a rubber-stamp body, was the most senior figure in the leadership who had differences with the President, despite claims of unity after the death in February of Deng Xiaoping, the senior leader and architect of China's market reforms.

Mr Qiao's departure from the Central Committee means he loses his position as one of the six members of the powerful Politburo. President Jiang has therefore lost a potential rival.

There had been speculation about Mr Qiao's future ranking in

the standing committee, but never any suggestion he would step down. "He has retired," said one Chinese official, a former security chief who is now a political moderate.

Another standing committee member, General Liu Huaqing, 81, the country's senior military leader who was also considered a rival to Mr Jiang and sixth in the hierarchy, was also dropped, but his departure was less surprising on account of his age.

Younger Politburo members were elected yesterday and Beijing will announce the complete line-up today. Chinese sources said last night it was virtually certain that the unpopular Prime Minister, Li Peng, who must step down in March after two terms, would be given Mr Qiao's parliamentary chairmanship.

Mr Qiao, who has done much to begin to build the rule of law in China, would end up out in the cold along with his protégés, the sources

added. Diplomats said that giving a parliamentary position to a hardliner such as Mr Li, who signed the martial law order that sent troops into Tiananmen Square in June 1989, would send the wrong signal to the world about Chinese reforms. Some Chinese officials indicated that Mr Li's move into Mr Qiao's post was not definite. "You will see better by the end of the year," one said.

The week-long party congress, with 2,048 delegates, adopted a programme of sweeping economic reforms, including selling or declaring bankrupt many state-owned enterprises, while approving political changes to take China into the 21st century. The Chinese media hailed the congress as breaking new ideological ground.

To some Chinese, Mr Qiao's fate was not surprising. "There was never any doubt this would happen," one office worker said. "Qiao was a man of ability and thus dangerous in Jiang's eyes." The last



Bitter cup: Qiao Shi, right, and Zhu Rongji, the Deputy Prime Minister, being served tea at the congress in Beijing yesterday

senior leader to lose his position was the former party chief, Zhao Ziyang, who was purged after apparently showing sympathy for demonstrating students in Tiananmen Square just before the

crackdown. "It is almost unprecedented for someone of Qiao's stature to be unceremoniously dumped like this," one analyst said. China's leaders concede that the next few years could prove the most

difficult of the reform process. President Jiang's efforts to make state industries more efficient could increase unemployment and encourage corruption, with officials trying to buy state assets below

their value. "It doesn't matter to me who is up and who is down," said a Beijing taxi-driver last night after the congress had ended. "We common folk will still be doing the same thing."

World Bank signals boom time for China

For economists, the barometer is firmly set fair, Jonathan Mirsky writes

CHINESE economic development has been so rapid that, if China's 30 provinces were counted as individual economies, the 20 fastest growing economies in the world between 1978 and 1995 would have been Chinese, the World Bank said yesterday, forecasting further strong growth.

Although the bank describes a possible disastrous downturn, its outlook is optimistic. "Can China meet its challenges? We believe it can," said Vikram Nehru, main author of a World Bank report on the Chinese economy.

The bank is holding its annual meeting in Hong Kong and its report is rich in superlatives about the China phenomenon. It underwrites this confidence by lending China more money than any other country, \$3 billion (£1.8 billion) last year and a total since the early 1980s of \$28 billion.

Over the next 25 years it expects the Chinese economy to undergo a transformation which, the report claims, took about 65 years in Latin America and 80 years in the world's most advanced economies.

These changes, the bank forecasts, "will stretch China's social fabric to the limit", as hundreds of millions of people move to better

jobs, agriculture gives way to industry and urbanisation increases. Within 50 years the average Chinese will no longer be a farmer but an employee in either industry or services.

The bank projects two future models for China. One, considered a far less likely scenario, is China becoming the first significant example in East Asia of rapid growth followed by stagnation.

The decline would be characterised by increasingly inefficient state industries, already leading loss-makers in the national economy, and widening disparities in wealth between regions, country and city, and the sexes.

Poverty and rural migration would increase, with cities becoming "underboxes of tensions". Sustained government action was needed to avoid this scenario, the bank said.

Nicholas Hope, the bank's

former Country Director for China, yesterday described East Asian corruption as "a cancer". He said the absence in China of clear definitions of ownership was an obstacle to foreign investment.

In its list of China's systemic problems, however, the bank offers no comment on the role of the party or the absence of democratic institutions. Yesterday the current Country Director for China, Yukon Huang, observed that the party is "a cohesive forum for debate", and Mr Hope noted the beginnings of what he called Chinese "village democracy".

In its more optimistic scenario for the country, the World Bank foresees a "competitive, caring and confident China" in which poverty will have been eliminated, according to Mr Huang. Mr Nehru anticipated an environmentally cleaner China with a functioning legal system. It would be the

world's second largest trading nation, able to feed its population largely with its own resources but also buying food on the world markets. In the optimistic model, China would be fully integrated into the world economy, as a customer, supplier and investor, and with a "greater weight and voice in international institutions".

China's particular strengths, the World Bank observes, are its high rate of savings, its "pragmatic" reforms, a disciplined and relatively well-educated work force — and rich overseas Chinese who are eager to invest in the country of their ethnic and cultural origin.

Although women suffer discrimination, Mr Nehru said yesterday, their status was higher than in most other Third World countries. The report observes that education in China, while still limited for most people, is better than the Third World average.

between 500,000 and two million people had died from starvation in North Korea, although other experts doubt the figure is that high.

Pyongyang had appealed to the international community for seed, fertiliser, pesticides and heavy earth-moving equipment, M Diouf said.

In Seoul, the South Korean Red Cross said it would ship its last batch of 50,000 tonnes of relief, including 7,552 tonnes of flour, potatoes and powdered milk, to the North this month. (Reuters/AP)

UN warning on food crisis in North Korea

Kuala Lumpur: North Korea, hit by drought, tidal waves and floods, faces a shortage of 1.9 million tonnes of grain over the next year, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation said yesterday.

"We expect 700,000 [tonnes] should be provided through commercial means, but there would be a deficit of 1.2 million tonnes of grains, which would require international assistance," said Jacques Diouf, the FAO Director-General. World Vision, the American aid group, said this week that

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A robbery, a reporter – and somewhere a cellar full of masterpieces

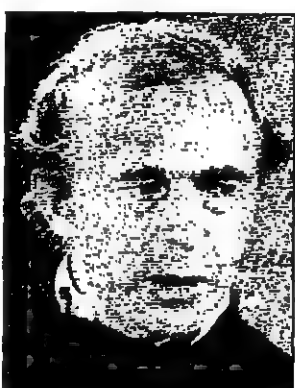
The FBI think it knows who committed the US art theft of the century, but not where the pictures are hidden. However, a journalist may have the key, says Barry Wigmore

The rendezvous was in the small hours, when streets are empty and an FBI tail is easy to spot. A car picked up Tom Mashberg, a reporter for the *Boston Herald* newspaper, on a street corner and took him on a zigzagging route around the city, the driver nervously looking in his rear-view mirror all the time.

He whispered into a walkie-talkie radio to friends in a backup car who were making sure no one was in pursuit. Eventually, the car pulled up outside a warehouse in a rundown neighbourhood and Mashberg was quickly ushered in.

They went through a series of padlocked doors, each one opened by the rubber-gloved guide with keys from a large ring. What Mashberg saw by torchlight in the creaking warehouse that night could solve the mystery of America's art theft of the century. It has certainly had FBI men running round in circles, scratching their heads in frustration.

From a dusty tube the man in rubber gloves pulled what appeared to Mashberg's untold eye to be *Storm on the Sea of Galilee*, a Rembrandt. The painting is one of a dozen works by such artists as Vermeer, Manet and Degas that were stolen seven years ago from a Boston museum. The paintings have been valued by experts at anything from \$500 million up.



Connor Jr. master thief

With a flourish, the man pointed out Rembrandt's signature. "I was almost expecting a fanfare of trumpets, he was so proud of it," says Mashberg. Waving towards six or seven similar tubular containers packed in a large, dark canvas bag at the bottom of the storage bin, the man said: "That's the rest of them." But he did not offer to show any more.

Mashberg was hustled out of the warehouse, pushed into a waiting taxi that had been hailed by his guide's companions, and warned not to hang around or try following them. "We're moving the suit right now, so it won't be here if you come back," said his guide. It was only the beginning of a bizarre story – not so much a whodunnit as a where-are-they-now. "To tell the truth," says Mashberg, a 37-year-old

investigative journalist, "I felt a little silly being caught up in the middle of all this cloak-and-dagger stuff." As the days unfolded, however, he realised he was a key player in a remarkable story of intrigue and double-dealing.

In the early hours of March 18, 1990, two men dressed as policemen forced their way into Boston's Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. They tied up the guards at gunpoint and in minutes cut the priceless paintings from their frames. The works included: *The Concert*, one of some 40 known works by Vermeer; two Rembrandts – the *Sea of Galilee* and *A Lady and a Gentleman in Black*; a Manet; five works by Degas; an oil on an oak panel by Govaert Flinck; and a Chinese bronze beaker from 1200 BC.

The FBI launched a huge search, enlisting through Interpol the art-theft squads of police forces in Britain, several other European countries, and Japan. The Gardner Museum put up a \$5 million reward.

Investigators deduced that a five-man gang had staged the robbery – the two who went inside, and three outside. Over the years they established that two Mafia hold-up artists, who are now dead, were members of the gang. They have been named in American papers as Robert Donat, a well-known Boston Mob enforcer, and David Houghton, a member of a gang of New



Clockwise, from left: *The Concert*, by Vermeer; *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee*, by Rembrandt; *Cher Torton*, by Manet; and Rembrandt's *A Lady and a Gentleman in Black*. The four paintings are part of a dozen works that were stolen from a Boston museum seven years ago

England art thieves in the 1950s and 1960s, famous as a trusted "stand-up guy" who kept his mouth shut whenever he was questioned by the police, which was often. Houghton, it is believed, was the original keeper of the stolen works of art. But the trail went cold with his death, apparently from natural

causes. The FBI investigation stalled.

Two years ago the US Justice Department announced an amnesty, saying that the statute of limitations on the theft had run out and that, therefore, the thieves themselves – if they were finding the paintings too hot to sell – could return them and claim the reward. No questions asked. But still there were no takers.

Until four months ago, that is, when Mashberg, hearing a whisper from one of his contacts, started digging around again. His inquiries led to William Youngworth, a Boston antiques dealer and a longtime friend of a well-known art thief, Myles Connor Jr.

Connor, 54, could not have been involved in the Gardner Museum theft, however. He was in jail at the time, in the seventh year of a ten-year sentence for drug trafficking. Sentencing Connor, the judge had told him: "You are an habitual criminal. Society doesn't like you, and in this court, I am society."

Connor is a master thief, specialising in art and antiques, says the FBI. His record includes a 1966 gun

apartment belonging to one of his friends and found the missing charter among a pile of Connor's papers.

Now it seems, with Youngworth as the go-between, he is trying the same ploy to get the last three years chopped off the sentence he is now serving.

Mashberg believes he is being used as a public messenger to pressure the authorities into doing a deal. On the day that his story about the warehouse visit was published, US marshals escorted Connor in handcuffs from an Illinois jail to Boston for the local FBI to question. He is still in custody in Boston, but with neither side trusting the other, negotiations have broken down. Youngworth has told the FBI

he can broker the return of the Gardner paintings. He and Connor want the \$5 million reward, and Connor wants to be set free. That could be a big problem, because the judge who jailed him would have to agree... and he obviously does not like Connor.

As a sign of good faith, Youngworth returned a small wax seal that was missing from the Charles I charter when it was recovered. Police retaliated by raiding Youngworth's home and charging him with possession of unlicensed guns and a small amount of marijuana. He went into hiding in New York with his lawyer, protesting he was being harassed for trying to do a public service.

The FBI, who have spoken informally to Mashberg, believe Youngworth was his guide that night. Protected by

the First Amendment, and acting on the advice of his newspaper's lawyer, Mashberg can give only an embarrassed "no comment" to that question.

Can Connor deliver? Or is it all an elaborate hoax? Mashberg believes that because of the way he arrived at Youngworth's door, the painting he saw is genuine. "Why would they take such elaborate steps for a hoax?" he asks. "Even if a deal is done, no one's letting Connor out of jail until experts authenticate those paintings."

So, it seems, somewhere in a lock-up warehouse or a dark cellar in Boston today, the proceeds of the art theft of the century sit gathering dust. But perhaps not for long – Mashberg says he expects another exciting development next week.

► REWARDING TIMES ◀

PLAY PORTFOLIO £200,000 TO BE WON


£2,000 TO BE WON TODAY – TURN TO THE EQUITY PAGE 29

This week we launch a new Portfolio, an exciting opportunity to play the stock market without getting your fingers burnt. You can win £2,000 a day six days a week in *The Times*, and you can play every Sunday in *The Sunday Times* to win £5,000. Better still, there is a £10,000 weekly prize, if you play Portfolio in both papers, seven days a week. Your gamecard was inserted in Tuesday's *Times* and another will be inserted on Monday, September 22. Playing Portfolio is easy and fun. Every week companies' share prices go up and down in the real world of the Stock Exchange. So you can experience the excitement of the stock market swings, but without taking any risks.

Yesterday's winners were: D Watts of Wrexham; A Rogers of Barking; and J Manning of Weston-Super-Mare. They won £667 each.

HOW TO PLAY

- On each individual Portfolio gamecard there are eight numbers printed in a grid. (See example, above)
- These numbers represent eight out of 44 companies listed on the Portfolio panel (see Equity Prices, page 29).
- The eight are your "Portfolio of Shares".
- The 44 companies are taken from the hundreds whose shares are listed on *The Times* Equity Prices page every day.
- Simply check the share price movement (+ or -) of your eight Portfolio shares.
- When you have checked all eight share movements and entered them on to the Portfolio panel on page 29,

THE  TIMES		THE SUNDAY TIMES			
<i>Portfolio</i>					
1728000	10	14	15	29	73734081
	35	37	38	39	

add them up to obtain your plus or minus total.

- When adding up your total, ignore fractions, ie enter 16½ as 16 (the symbol ... equals no change).
- If your overall total exactly matches the points required in the Daily Portfolio Dividend, printed on the Portfolio panel on page 29, you win or share the £2,000 daily prize.

WEEKLY ACCUMULATOR GAME

The weekly accumulator game starts in *The Times* on Monday, September 22. To play the weekly accumulator game you simply add up your daily Portfolio totals, Monday to Sunday. If your accumulator total matches exactly the weekly portfolio accumulator dividend, published in the *Sunday Times*, you win or share the weekly accumulator prize of £10,000.

HOW TO CLAIM YOUR PRIZE

Claims for *The Times* daily Portfolio dividend must be made to the Portfolio claims line on 0171-481 3388 between 9.30am and 3pm today. No claims can be accepted outside these hours and you must claim your prize the day you win. You must have your card with you when you claim. Other persons can claim on your behalf provided they have your card. No responsibility can be accepted for failure to contact the claims office for any reason within the stated hours. In the event of more than one valid claim for any prize, that prize will be divided equally among the winners.

*You can get a Portfolio card by calling the card request line on 0171-481 3388 during normal office hours. There will be another gamecard in *The Times* on Monday, September 22, and cards are also available at selected newsagents.

With a flourish he pointed at the artist's signature

battle with police in which an officer was critically wounded as they moved in on the stolen goods from another museum robbery. Connor was jailed for six years.

Of supreme relevance to the Gardner theft is a deal that Connor struck with prosecutors in 1975. In court accused of stealing Andrew Wyeth paintings from a Maine mansion, he pleaded guilty, but escaped a jail sentence by telling police where to find a \$5 million Rembrandt that had been stolen from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

The FBI now believes that Connor organised the Rembrandt theft to use as a bargaining chip to get out of jail. They also believe that he masterminded another theft when he faced a murder charge in 1985. A few months before the trial, the first page of the 350-year-old Royal Charter issued by King Charles I to Boston's colonial founders disappeared from the Massachusetts state archives.

Connor jumped bail while the jury was deliberating. He was found not guilty anyway. A week later police raided an

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Philip Howard



■ God save us, enfants de la patrie, from the politically correct anthem

The best national anthems are chauvinist, xenophobic and bloodthirsty. Take them for all in all, you cannot give them high marks for poetry or ethics. So Yannick Noah, the sexy black French tennis star, ought to be on to a good thing with his sanitised rap words for the *Marseillaise*. And he is reported to be selling a lot of discs of his single *Oh Réve, Oh Dream, Citoyens*. Let us at last form a union, *Vivons, Vivons, Get a Life, Get a Life, Liberté et Fraternité*. Noah's shift of message from arms to dreams is impeccably wet and supposedly in tune with youth. The original words of the *Marseillaise*, composed overnight as a marching song for the French armies, drip with gore and glory. "May the filthy blood of our enemies drench our fields." *Entendez-vous, dans les campagnes, Mûgissent ces farouches soldats* seems too strong for *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, which mistranslates the lines as plunkingly as Molesworth, the curse of St Custard's: "Come together in the countryside! To lower these savage soldiers." Savage aliens cutting the throats of our sons are off message, out of touch and old Labour in this day 'n' age. Noah's version is modern, caring.

But it does not have a hope in hell of replacing the *Marseillaise*. Forget that tolerance and peace are not the French virtues that come first to mind. Remember *The Toys of Peace*, the story by "Saki". Progressive parents give their children pacifist toy role models from the caring professions. And the children mutilate them into models of war and glory. Blood and battles appeal to the basic instincts of children and national anthems at play. Pious national anthems are dire. Once it decided to drop *God Save the Queen*, Australia should have adopted *Waltzing Matilda*, which chants the chippy wistfulness and wit of the country, with a tune that we all know. *Advance, Australia Fair* is AWFUL, and deludes Australian children that "girt" is a usable grown-up word. *O Canada! Our home and native land!* wins minus marks for weedy sentiments and *nuls points* for its send-for-the sick-bag stalwart sons and gentle maidens. India has fine words by Tagore, but they are in Bengali and so inaccessible to most Indians.

The national anthems that bring tears to the eyes, even of aliens, express primitive and violent emotions. First equal come the *Marseillaise* and *The Star-Spangled Banner*, which commemorates an obscure engagement in a small war that solved nothing. The words are absurd melodrama. "No refuge could save the hireling and slave! From the terror of flight or the gloom of the grave." But let no wizz-kid advertising poet rewrite the words with clever soundbites about Great Societies or Contracts with America. *The Internationale* and *Deutschland über Alles* were brilliant (international anthems). The Devil does have some of the best tunes, and a fine national anthem does not necessarily signal that it praises a country anybody would choose to live in.

And as for our own dear old *God Save the Queen*, it is not as dreary as it can sound. Its words go back to the Coverdale version of the Old Testament and Udall's play (c. 1540), *Ralph Roister Doister*, and its tune to Purcell and medieval galliards. Parry's setting of Blake's *Jerusalem*, the most popular wedding hymn of the summer, has more rousing music. It starts with four questions to which the answer is "no". I have heard a dotty theory that its "dark Satanic Mills" refer to Utilitarians James and John Stuart. The words of *Rule Britannia* are always sung wrong. The chorus is the only part that we all know. And when called upon, we make the confident but unauthorised statement that the old girl rules the waves, instead of singing the poet's stern advice or nowadays wistful command, "Britannia, rule the waves!"

But *God Save the Queen*, when performed to the proper tempo laid down by George V and formalised in an Army Order, can still make the hair bristle. The crowd at Wembley for England's match against Moldova sang it as a tribal war song. Attempts to change its references to the knavish tricks of enemies to more compassion and caring must and will be resisted.



Heavenwards to hell

For the true mountaineer, fear is enjoyable. That is how I discovered, high in the Andes, that I wasn't one

Never let your daughter marry a mountaineer. Serious climbers are seriously weird folk. They are also possessed of an almost unbelievable fortitude. Just how weird, and just how formidable, I have had the chance to discover, climbing this summer in Bolivia.

"We found this Basque," said Yossi to us. "He had been there about a year. The condors had left him in kit form."

"Kit form?" I queried. "Kit form? Just bones held together by GorTex. Nice outfit. We buried him there and I got a photo sent to the parents. Apparently they were quite touched. Don't think me undeluding."

Yossi Brain, despite the exotic name, comes originally from Walsall. With two books to his name (*Trekking in Bolivia* and *Bolivia: a climbing guide*, both published by The Mountaineers), he has settled in La Paz and guides and organises expeditions in the Andes. Breaking with Fleet Street tradition, I paid for mine myself, so I can be as rude about Yossi as I like, but the truth is that as a guide he is a total professional and we felt completely safe in his hands. As a human being, however, Yossi is... well, possessed. "There's about 30 more peaks over there to the south," he gestured. "I reckon I could knock most of them off in a year or so." We looked out over a frozen sea of rocks, needing some 20,000ft into the sky, and wondered why that knowledge that one had not climbed them could inspire anything other than a profound sense of relief. "Then there's the complete circuit of Illimani. I've got to put in some work on that. And of course the eastern face."

Pardon me, but why the eastern face? The eastern face looks positively homicidal. What was wrong with the western face, the easiest way up?

It was the easy way up Illimani that Yossi took my party and me. But he insisted first that we went on a preliminary trip to Condoriri, a few thousand feet lower, to learn the use of the ice axe, crampons and the climbing rope. Here we were caught in a blizzard, and I managed to fall down a crevasse, providing for the group a lively demonstration of why being roped together and carrying ice axes saves your life.

Back at camp, Yossi pointed up at a peak. Cabeza del Condor, shaped rather like Nelson's Column. "There's a German up there, somewhere," he remarked, idly. I knew him well enough

by now to know he meant a dead German.

For the ascent of the great Illimani itself (about whose summit *The Times* Atlas is a little generous but which is, in fact, just under 21,500ft), we were now well trained and prepared. Climbing manuals have the cheek to describe this as "peu difficile", but be assured that alone up a peak in a gale, would be really difficult. You can't breathe.

Ten thousand feet lower, in La Paz, we set out, breathing easily, in a Toyota Land Cruiser. Passing the suburbs I noticed a dog wearing a ribbon round its

"Ah, pioneered by Chileans" I said, brightly.

"No, six fell off in 1989," he replied. "Tomorrow we practise crampons and harness on the grass here, so that you don't."

Nido de Condor was some 3,000ft up the ridge, a courtyard-sized snow ledge on the rock. Yossi produced the choop-late, of which he had a seemingly unending supply, the meal which he and his comrades, the ever-cheerful Archie, always managed to contrive, and we slept — as best you can when to turn over in your sleeping bag leaves you panting. I kept awaking, fighting a sort

of panic for oxygen, tearing the hood from around my mouth and gasping for the zip of the tent-front, until the cold air, like a knife in the face, drove me back for cover.

After midnight Yossi and Archie conjured porridge and hot chocolate out of somewhere, though at that height water boils too cool to take the glue out of oats. I used a toothbrush to eat it with when I forgot my spoon. Said Yossi: "You can clean your teeth at the same time." It took an age to get the gear on. I resolved to stick to pursuits where the accommodations do not outweigh the human.

And off we trudged. Who can describe the wretched satisfaction of an iron will, a slow plod and a grim resolve to think of nothing but the next fifty feet? You get a sort of rhythm: miserable, yet strangely comforting. You watch the rope in front of you, lest it slacken, and feel the rope behind, lest it grow taut. Somehow you look back down — a black vastness at your heels, as though the world has fallen into a hole behind you. Somehow you look up. So many stars! The snow around you feels like a flying carpet in space, baseless, dropping away on all sides should you stumble. And so hard to breathe.

Very, very slowly, the sky began to tinge with light. Huge glaciers, ice and

rock walls, supernatural shapes and colours, loomed out of the dawn. And still each sickening climb, stumbling and ice-axing our way up each slope, seemed to yield to yet another beyond it.

The air had been utterly still. As we clawed our way up into the morning, we saw a distant slope — surely the last? — and edged with sun. There we would reach the sunny side of the mountain. It became a sort of heaven we must eventually reach. All at once we did. Emerging, gasping at the top of the ridge, the sun hit our faces. That decorative plume of what had looked like frozen cloud curving from the ridge was a 40mph wind rushing up from the eastern — Amazon — side of Illimani, whipping snow and ice particles with it. My goggles frosted up inside. When I laboured to take off a mitten to clear them, my fingers went dead. "Frostbite in January, amputate in June," said Yossi cheerfully, as he helped me back into cover. I turned to face the sun and its ice slipstream again. The light was a blinding yellow as the flying ice blasted and stung. The strangest combination of sensations.

To my friends and me, surviving the next half hour was the dominating ambition. But Yossi knew this climb backwards and had already moved on in his mind. He had a couple of volcanoes in Ecuador to knock off. There are 99 summits in the Andes higher than 6,000 metres. Perhaps we shall one day speak of "Yossis" as they speak of Munroes. "Shall we stroll on a bit, then?" he asked us. As he had already started to stroll, and we were all tied to him by a rope, the question was rhetorical. Slaves being led in chains to the waiting gallows must have felt like this.

It was only another 800 yards along that ridge, but it felt like an eternity. The ridge narrowed. Falling away at our feet was Bolivia, Chile and the Pacific to our right. To our left, miles beneath, the stormclouds of the Amazon basin frothed and boiled in an extravagant show of agitated cumulus. We all but crawled the last hundred yards to the highest point on the ridge: a bathroom-sized cockpit on the roof of South America, sheer drops on three sides.

"This is terrifying," moaned Louis. "Shut up and enjoy the fear," said Yossi. I think that is what separates us. I think a true mountaineer just wants to do more and more difficult things, until he dies.

Matthew Parris

dominated by dark oils of famous battle scenes. The less militaristic Straw will make his choice from displays at the Koestler Foundation, which encourages prisoners to explore their creative (ie, non-psychopathic) sides.

● SOME learn arithmetic and the difference between right and wrong at school. Our Education Secretary, David Blunkett, learnt revolution. He tells *The Times* Educational Supplement: "When we had sausages four times in a week I led a delegation to the head and said that if the staff could eat rump steak, then a diet of sausages was unacceptable." In revenge for such major slights we were given socialism.

● TWO decades after Sir Edward Heath was commissioned to write his autobiography, he has submitted the first chapter. The book's title? *The Last Laugh*. Surely not a reference to his outliving a certain baroness?

takable tones of a Tory lady: "Is Douglas there?"

Cult status

A POSTER advertising the new Oasis single, *Stand by Me*, has just gone on display. It features a photograph of a Moonie wedding blessing in Korea, at which 360,000 couples were married.

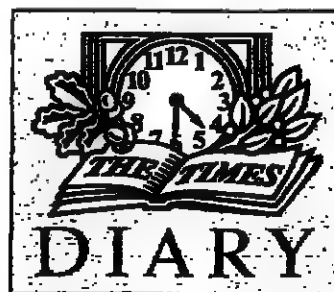
The Moonies are threatening to sue, claiming breach of copyright. Meanwhile, associates of the Gallagher boys are speculating privately that the rock star brothers might be on the verge of converting. Born Roman Catholics (they are working-class Mancunians), they once suggested that they were "bigger than God".

As one observer comments: "They live for controversy, and you can't get more controversial than joining the Moonies."

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Everybody out

THERE can be few hotels grand enough to satisfy the discerning tastes of your average union baron. Take John Edmonds, general



secretary of the GMB. During the TUC conference in Brighton last week he stomped out of the hotel after an altercation with the joint receptionist.

Problem. He, and other senior union bods, were due to stay there for the Labour conference. But in a fit of anger, Edmonds cancelled. And now they are homeless. "Every bedroom from Brighton to Hove is booked," says a mole. "It looks like they'll be shacking up in B&Bs in Worthing." So who says unions have been marginalised?

Howard's end

JACK STRAW, while clearly welcoming his predecessor's policies, is less sure about his taste in art. He is chucking out Michael Howard's gloomy paintings in favour of works by convicts.

"They don't exactly light up the room," says a Straw crony of Howard's collection, which is

Sour note

RUMBLINGS of religious dissent pervade the Elizabethan galleries of Sudley Castle in Gloucestershire. The pad's owner, Henry Dent Brocklehurst, 31, has alarmed his local vicar by suggesting that his forthcoming wedding service should have a Hawaiian theme.

Inspiration for this comes from his talented young fiancée Lili Maltese, who hails from that enchanting outpost. "We are having a Hawaiian wedding party so it would be silly to have an English service," says Miss Maltese, who is to write the words to the service,



In tune: Henry and Lili

to be held in Sudley's chapel next May. "I'd like to write something more warm and informal, more about love and less about obeying. But our vicar is being so funny about it — he doesn't seem keen on the idea at all."

Indeed he is not. "I couldn't possibly do it, it would be illegal," rumbles the Rev Michael Page. "They would have to formalise it in a register office."

Blair is now the kingmaker

Crown and Church are leaning Left, says John Lloyd

Tony Blair has been spending time dabbling in the mysteries of the State — Crown and Church. He had not meant to, but he feels he must. And in doing so, he shows us how frail and yet necessary these institutions are. Both the monarchy and the Church had gone over, in their different ways, to Labour. Both the Prince of Wales now, and Diana, Princess of Wales, in her life, found new Labour's posture of concern without socialism amenable to their own public discourse, and both drifted into Blair's orbit.

The Church is more obviously radical. The most active and public bishops turned to the Left and social policy has become increasingly pro-interventionist, as the Church's recent report, *Unemployment and the Future of Work* confirms. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, gave the most leftist of the major speeches at the TUC last week: his clergy's experience is one of need and want, which their archbishop distilled into a rhetoric recalling the easy certainties of Tony Benn: "If we choose to run the economy so that it can create more jobs, we can do so."

The Crown and Church came over to Labour because the ground on which they stood — consensus, harmony, care for the underdog, charitable activity — was, or seemed to be, narrowed by a governing Right which emphasised the purity of market outcome. But they also have done so because they are in crisis... they have lost the faith, and they need to be saved.

The Crown and the Church are deeply exhausted. The sliding away of the public dignity of both institutions has been both careless and relentless. But the media have been able to feed off the bodies of the two institutions only because they sense the death at their cores. That death is centuries old. Divine Right and the certainty that Christ revealed the truth of God were shaken out of the intelligentsia and much of the political class by the 18th or 19th centuries. Since then we have lived with the melancholy roar of faith's withdrawal, as both institutions make the kind of brilliant displays of form to disguise ebbing content which befit a nation whose literary patron saint is the greatest creator of fantasies in the world.

New Labour has inherited these twin institutions in decline and typically thinks it can Do Something About It. It had the crisis of the monarchy thrust upon it because of the death of Diana. Having made its usual dispassionate reading of the public mood — and being confirmed in its view that the monarchy is here to stay by the Left's fantasy that the response to Diana's death meant it was on the way out — its leader is using his authority with Prince Charles to bring forth a Modern Monarchy. Charles is presently Blair's creature; he depends utterly on the Prime Minister to point him to a path at once demotic and dignified, caring but charismatic, warm but Windsor... and so on, through all the familiar new Labour antinomies.

It is likely he will succeed. Lacking a republican mood, and with the support of the Government, the Palace should be amenable to being bumped into this millennial version of modernity — having modernised successfully enough to retain its existence, wealth and privileges for centuries. One of the two main absurdities in Earl Spencer's speech was that Diana did not require a royal connection to attain her lustre in life (the other was that she inhabited a different moral universe from the tabloids); in fact, she acquired such lustre largely from the worldwide recognition of the British Royal Family.

This points up something which was not so evident before her death. The royals have at least partly made the transition to international super-celebrity status; Diana was their creation more than she was her own. In becoming contemporary superstars, the Windsors have secured a new place for themselves in the media galaxy — but it is one which requires careful media management with the attendant paraphernalia of focus groups, media consultants and rebuttal units. Even if the Prime Minister wanted to abolish them, he probably could not.

The Church is at once sadder and wiser. It has no great media lustre even in this country; but some of its priests and bishops are intellectually and morally impressive. It lacks faith, however — except on its evangelical wing, whose semi-fundamentalist enthusiasm cannot stand the test of reason. It has not been able to develop a working model of a faith in which rational people could wholeheartedly believe.

Modernisation thus means sharing up. It means recognising that the Church's ritual is essential for State occasions and is often desired for the private last things. Having recognised that is essential, Blair has moved to try to make sure it is useful, that it does uncontroversial good works, takes part in his efforts to knit together communities and gives ethical support to the family. From having been the Tory party at prayer, it is being shaped as the Labour Party in the community.

There will be no republic, no disestablishment; this was true of new Labour before Diana's death and is even more true of it after. One can sense a rhetorical trope being readied: "The Crown and the Church have served Britain well in the past and can, too, in the future."

New Labour will see to it that they do. John Lloyd is associate editor of the *New Statesman*.

Game show

CHARLES SPENCER, from the well of grief, stung the Royal Family. Now he has turned his sights on a different blood sport — big-game hunting. He is to present a cinematic debate on the thorny subject of blood sports.

The programme, *Cruel to be Kind*, has been entered in a television festival in Cannes, where it will be screened for the first time next week.

This is the first of a series of the earl is to present on "world ethical issues". His debut, a half-hour exploration, will blast the ethics of game-hunting in South Africa, where he moved last year to escape the cheetah prints.

Althorp, the family seat, is a renowned shooting estate, and with his experience as a presenter on American television he was considered the ideal candidate.

I am delighted for the earl, who has displayed such dignity in the face of his sister's death, despite facing the trauma of his wife Victoria filing for divorce in Cape Town last week.

Blood sports are a tricky issue for the Spencers. Although brought up in the accepting atmosphere of the aristocracy, Diana, Princess of Wales, developed ambivalent feelings towards hunting. Spencer's views are equally

complex. "He's against it on principle, but understands that a lot of revenue is generated," says a colleague. The earl's solution? Shooting elephant and buffalo with paintballs.

● It was long into the night that Robin Cook sat at his desk in Carlton Gardens. The telephone rang from an outer office. Realising that his secretary had left, the Foreign Secretary answered. He was met by the unmis-



There goes Wee Willie speaking his mind again

البريد 1550



DEATH IN CAIRO

The difficult journey to peace and tolerance in Egypt

Egyptians will have been as shocked and angered as were Germans and other foreigners by yesterday's petrol bomb attack on a tourist bus parked outside the Egyptian Museum of Antiquities in the heart of Cairo. Nothing has done more to discredit Islamist extremism in Egypt than the campaign, begun in 1992 by the terrorist group al-Gamaa al-Islamiya, to bring down the Government by hitting the tourist industry. Thousands of Egyptians depend on tourism for a living, and public hostility has been a key weapon in the Government's struggle to stamp out armed militancy.

Yesterday's heavy toll of dead and injured should not obscure the extent of its success. Tourism has largely recovered since 1994 because, although the violent incidents against foreigners that have killed 35 and injured around 80 since 1992 continue, such attacks are now rare enough to make Egypt a holiday destination rather than a place of the United States. This attack does not fit with the Government's recent claims to have beaten back terrorist activity to a few provincial pockets of southern Egypt. But it is probably true that, after a five-year campaign in which more than a thousand Egyptians — mainly police, officials, Coptic Christians and liberal intellectuals — have been murdered, the overall threat from Islamist fanatics has been sharply reduced.

The Government's ruthless defence of the security of the State is justified by the tactics employed against it; but so broad has been its assault on Islamist opposition that the price in civil liberties has been high. The Egyptian Organisation of Human Rights puts the number held under emergency laws that permit lengthy detention without trial at 17,000. Caught in the net along with terrorists are non-violent advocates of an Islamist theocracy and too many of those whose lawful expressions of political opposition should find outlets in a confident society.

Some international criticism of Egypt's record has been facile. When Islamist litigants use the courts to hound such distinguished Muslim scholars as Dr Nasr Abu Zaid for their tolerant interpretation of

Islam, and when Islamist academics at Al-Azhar, the leading Islamic university, have issued *fatwas* against "blasphemous" writers, the concept of "non-violent" is itself qualified. In a radicalised environment, it is not easy to find ways for political opposition and for free speech to function effectively without these avenues being abused for anti-democratic ends. President Mubarak, who has himself narrowly escaped assassination, has solid reasons for caution.

But if the Government is correct that Islamist extremism now exercises less fascination than it did for Egypt's generally tolerant people, then this is the time to relax unreasonable constraints on political and press activity. Market reforms have released the economy from the doldrums and growth of more than 5 per cent a year is expanding job opportunities and hope. Rising, though still uneven, prosperity has been matched by an astute and overdue doubling of spending on social services. But political aspirations tend to rise with prosperity, and that challenge too requires a response.

Blatant government manipulation of elections is counter-productive. It engenders cynicism about the political process, demonstrated in the disturbingly low turnout in local elections earlier this year. So is the use of press restrictions to suppress investigations of official corruption. Police and military operations may be the first line of defence against Islamist extremists but openness to political change and debate is the equally important second line.

Egyptian secularism has to find space for the undoubtedly more devoutly Muslim society that Egypt has become; and the Mubarak regime, many of whose most powerful figures have been in power for more than two decades, has to make room for a new political generation. Economically, Egypt is modernising rapidly, but it is politically stagnant. Broader trust in the political leadership is needed to consolidate a victory that must still be judged provisional. Immobilism at the top is not healthy. In still waters, Egyptians well know, mosquitos breed.

BEYOND SHAME

Solid ways to help those cheated by the pensions industry

The indefatigable Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, was out "naming and shaming" again yesterday, putting pressure on pensions companies to compensate customers to whom they had mis-sold personal pensions. Unfortunately the scolding seems to have had remarkably little effect. The worst of the companies are still behaving like recalcitrant children who pretend deafness at the sound of a parental admonition.

Yet it is in the interests both of the pensions companies and of the Government that this mis-selling be rectified as quickly and efficiently as possible. The companies are likely to win substantial business from Labour's reform of the welfare state: as stakeholder pensions, insurance for long-term care, and insurance against illness become matters for the private sector rather than the State, the pickings will be rich. But only those companies that have proved their probity will be sanctioned by the State and trusted by the public.

The pensions providers claim that their dishonesty is not deliberate: they have found it hard to obtain enough details from their customers' former occupational schemes to calculate whether or not the personal pensions sold were bad value. Thinking laterally, a small group of companies led by Legal & General has taken a different approach: offering customers a guarantee, underwritten by a legal indemnity, that if their personal pensions on retirement are worth less than they would have been in the occupational scheme, they will be paid the difference.

This is a far more sensible approach. As long as the guarantees are legally backed, they offer peace of mind to worried

pensionholders. Some will be happy to accept the guarantee in lieu of compensation now. Others should be allowed to rely upon the guarantee as an interim measure until their individual cases are settled.

Mrs Liddell should encourage these guarantees as an industry-wide standard. She should also turn her mind to longer-term reform of the selling of financial products. It seems extraordinary that salesmen are still allowed to work on commission in this arcane and complex field. Their incentive is to sell as many products as possible: customers are rarely in a position to challenge their advice. Even now, companies such as the Prudential advertise for salesmen claiming that, on earnings, "the sky's the limit". This is only likely to be true if some people are sold products they do not need or cannot afford.

This is not a business in which "caveat emptor" applies. As in medicine, customers are totally reliant on the advice that they receive from an expert. They need to be able to trust that expert, to be confident that the advice is in their interests alone. Even independent financial advisers cannot be relied upon to give the best guidance: they too earn commission from any sales they make, and will always be tempted to recommend the product that pays them the most.

If the public is to learn to trust this sector again, there is only one solution. Salesmen who work for companies should be paid salaries, not commission. Independent advisers should charge fees for consultation, as accountants do, but receive no reward from the products they recommend. Otherwise, the Government's welfare reforms will be in danger of being undermined by the reputation of its new providers.

I SPY WHAT I EAT

Revealed: the link between espionage and Escoffier

The best recipes, like the best intelligence, are closely guarded secrets. A sous-chef at a fashionable brasserie in St Germain des Prés would be as horrified as the most discreet MI6 controller to be asked to identify his sauces.

And when the bubbly niece of a grand society hostess is cajoled by a jealous rival to part with the secret ingredients of that legendary soufflé, the political bombshell is as devastating as the discovery of a double agent at the very heart of Whitehall. No wonder, therefore, that spies and cooks have so much in common. No wonder that the culinary arts are merely a more decorative and visible manifestation of the black arts of espionage.

Harry Palmer, the determinedly munificent Cockney who brought espionage out of the cold in the 1960s, was always cooking. His speciality was scrambled eggs — a reflection, perhaps, of the obsession at the "office" for scrambling everything (though poaching secrets was also part of the spy's routine).

George Smiley also enjoyed a good meal, though since his days in Germany he had little time to cook for himself: culinary pleasures were limited to what was on offer at the

Nineties seem to spend as much time in the kitchen as in the satellite imaging lab.

How satisfying, therefore, to find real spies copying — as is their wont — their celluloid portrayals. The CIA, as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations, has just published a cookbook, with recipes and comments by a few former agents and spouses, including Barbara Bush — said to make a terrific apple pie — and Julia Child, once a file clerk for the Office of Strategic Studies who found the transition from fingering secrets to fingering pastry all too easy. The "Company" apparently encouraged an interest in cuisine. It relieved stress, satisfied the professional need to roast, baste and grill and gave spies a safe topic of conversation when every other subject was taboo. Even the weather can lead to dangerous discussion of cold fronts, satellites and computer forecasts.

Markus Wolf, the East German spy chief, was also a dab hand in the kitchen, though his book, *Secrets of Russian Cuisine*, does seem a rather uncomradely spilling of the Kremlin's beans. He probably recruited as many cooks to be spies as vice-versa. CIA agents must spend years of their lives in restaurants: let us hope their recipes are not as bland as their table talk.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Setting priorities on road safety

From Sir Norman Fowler, MP for Sutton Coldfield (Conservative)

Sir, I welcome the Government's statement that it intends to make action against speeding a priority in road safety policy (report, September 16). I doubt, however, if advertising alone will substantially reduce the toll of deaths and serious injuries caused by speeding.

The most urgent need is to ensure that speed limits are enforced. As everyone knows, limits are currently widely ignored. The action that would have most immediate effect would be to extend the use of speed cameras throughout Britain.

A report published by the Police Research Group in 1996 compared the costs of installing and operating speed cameras with the reduction in accident costs and income from fines. The result was that speed cameras generated a return of five times the cost of the investment after one year — and more than 25 times the amount after five years.

In the light of this evidence I would urge the Government to take immediate action to extend speed cameras. Yours faithfully, NORMAN FOWLER, Chief Opposition Spokesman for Environment, Transport and the Regions, House of Commons, September 17.

From Mr Geoffrey Bloom, JP
Sir, I was startled by your report to-day that the Government wants major police resources and manpower diverted to catching motorists travelling at as little as 35mph in a 30mph area.

Of course every life lost in a road accident is a tragedy, but the proposal contrasts markedly with your report in the same issue that the death toll from infection in hospitals "is responsible for at least 5,000 deaths a year". Moreover, hospital deaths appear to be on a rising trend, while road fatalities have been falling for many years.

The proposed diversion of police effort into stopping speeding offences also seems inappropriate when one reads, also in the same issue, of Scotland Yard's report on the gross ineffectiveness of its own detectives, deeming them likely to be "lacking in knowledge and investigative skills".

Both as a consumer of police services and as a magistrate, it seems to me that the case for an expensive campaign against speeding motorists has not been made out. Certainly, we must all drive at a safe and appropriate speed; but instead of stigmatising normally law-abiding people for what is often a minor transgression, I would suggest that the police and the Government might better concentrate their resources respectively on combating serious crime and eradicating hospital infections.

Yours faithfully, GEOFFREY BLOOM, 5 Maytrees, Loom Lane, Radlett, Hertfordshire, September 16.

From the Director of the Pedestrians Association
Sir, You quite rightly gave front-page coverage to the Home Secretary's announcement that cracking down on speeding will be made a new police priority from November. Such a shift in policing priorities is no less welcome for being long overdue.

It has been estimated that road deaths cost the economy over £3 billion a year. Add to this the distress caused to those bereaved and the additional costs of road crashes and you have a huge social and economic problem still inadequately addressed.

But deaths and injuries on the road are only the most stark result of speeding traffic. Excessive traffic speeds blight residential areas, prevent children walking to school, deter adults from walking and cycling and detract generally from the quality of life.

The police have a central role in enforcing speed limits and other aspects of road traffic law. With their assistance, and the widespread use of speed cameras (financed by charges levied on convicted drivers), speeding should in due course come to be seen as the inherently anti-social activity that it is.

Yours faithfully, BEN PLOWDEN, Director, The Pedestrians Association, 126 Aldersgate Street, EC1, September 16.

From Mr David Willett
Sir, I applaud the Government's initiative on speeding drivers. However, I have never, in 28 years of driving, understood why "reminder" signs are so few and far between in 30mph zones, when in 40 and 50mph zones, or even in declassified areas, they are usually thick on the ground.

This to me makes no sense. It is in 30mph zones, which are usually the most critical and distracting areas in which to drive, that we all need reminding.

Yours sincerely, DAVID WILLETT, Ewness Farmhouse, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, david.willet@btinternet.com, September 17.

Sensations of unease, admiration and doubt at the RA

From Mr Michael A. C. Buckley

Sir, Sensation. What an apt title for the exhibition at the Royal Academy (report, leading article and letters, September 18).

Whilst I certainly did not like all the pieces on show, this body of work is filled with energy, vitality, irreverence and challenging and different ideas. Although many pieces deal with death in one form or another, the overriding impression is of a huge celebration of life. I expected to dislike the painting of Myra Hindley but found it extraordinary and appropriately arresting.

Charles Saatchi has put together a collection which should interest anyone who is curious and inquisitive. Being offended is sometimes an improvement on being complacent or dismissive.

Yours sincerely, MICHAEL BUCKLEY, 9 West Halkin Street, SW1, September 18.

From the Right Reverend Lord Habgood

Sir, "There is no such thing as real art that is immoral," so the Royal Academy informed us in yesterday's Times. I suppose it all depends on what is meant by "real". But members of that Academy might usefully have another look at *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, in which as unlikely a character as Oscar Wilde set out to show that aestheticism without morality can be demonic.

Do we really have to go back and learn that lesson all over again?

Yours faithfully, JOHN HABGOOD, 18 The Mount, Malton, North Yorkshire, September 18.

Aerospace industry funding appeal

From the Director General of The Society of British Aerospace Companies Ltd

Sir, "Only those companies and countries that have high levels of investment in skills and technologies... will succeed," Margaret Beckett, the Cabinet Minister responsible for science, told members of the British Association (report, September 9). She is perfectly correct.

The UK aerospace industry has consistently made a positive contribution to the country's balance of payments — averaging £2 billion a year over the last decade, rising to £2.9 billion in 1996 — and 14 per cent of its workforce is employed full-time on research and development activities. Yet in 1995, while £660 million was invested by the private sector on aerospace research and experimental development, the Government contributed only £220 million, some 25 per cent of the total spend.

For UK companies to remain competitive and continue to be successful in the global aerospace market, a review of the Government's financial input is urgently needed. By contrast, the US industry, which dominates the global aerospace market, receives 62 per cent of its research and develop-

ment funding from federal Government.

The aerospace industry has devised a national strategy for growth called "Foresight Action", aimed at increasing competitiveness and developing innovative products, capabilities and processes which can be demonstrated to prospective customers as proven, saleable products.

If aerospace is to flourish as a national asset and continue to be a major contributor to the economy, this programme has to be a partnership between industry and Government.

We are currently pressing for a re-allocation of public funds in favour of research and technology demonstration. We have made it clear that the industry will find its share of the cost; but without a fuller contribution from Government the Foresight Action strategy will fail to make a significant difference to the UK's aerospace performance.

Yours faithfully, DAVID MARSHALL, Director General, The Society of British Aerospace Companies Ltd, Duxbury House, 60 Petty France, Victoria, SW1, September 11.

Many serious artists and art historians, I believe, would strongly disagree with Mr Brison's analogy. Are we incapable, any more, of making the important distinction between what lies at the transitory, "car boot sale" extreme of art — attractive though it might be to some — and that which endures for reasons and qualities beyond the spurious and meretricious?

Let some continue to believe that the Emperor is wearing new clothes. But I'm not convinced.

Yours faithfully, JOHN PITTUCK, Hillside Cottage, 62 Dunmow Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, September 18.

From Mr R. Hawdon

Sir, Thank you Simon Jenkins (article, September 13) for debunking the nonsense of modern sensationalist "art". The reply to supporters of such banal rubbish is that almost any great artist of the past could have conceived almost any of the pieces today trumped up as art within ten minutes. Scarcely any of today's artists could have achieved any of their creations in a hundred years.

Yours faithfully, R. HAWDON, Ashlands, Belmont Road, Bath, September 13.

From Mrs H. M. Glew

Sir, The Royal Academy of Arts says that "There is no such thing as real art that is immoral", thus proving what the rest of us have always known: if it is immoral it is not art.

Yours faithfully, HELEN GLEW, 43 Hopkins Close, Bournemouth, Dorset, September 17.

From Mr William J. Woodward

Sir, Ofsted's inspectors having failed to identify sufficient failing teachers, you report ("Parents are given a sneak's hotline", September 11) that parents are now to be encouraged to telephone details of teachers' and schools' failings directly to the Department for Education and Employment, bypassing the local education authorities.

Is it not time for teachers to start campaigning for the establishment of "Ofstop" (The Office for Standards of Parenting), so that they can report violent, disruptive and unresponsive pupils directly to this body, bypassing LEA educational psychologists and the social services?

Yours etc, W. J. WOODWARD, Kadan, High Easter Road, Leaden Roding, Dunmow, Essex, bill_woodward@classic.msn.com, September 17.

From Mr Howard Hayer

Sir, This hotline is surely another indication of the Government introducing a "sneaky" society. We already have a hotline to the DSS for reporting illegal claimants.

I was always taught not to tell tales at school, and that we must not allow this country to emulate the activities of certain dictatorships where the only way of maintaining discipline was to report on one's neighbours.

Do we really need this? It is certainly a dangerous development, and not British.

Yours sincerely, HOWARD HAYER, Alcheydown Farm, Broadwoodleigh, Winkleigh, Devon, September 12.

From Mrs Louise Burke

Sir, Will the Government also set up a hotline so that parents can report on good teaching practice?

Yours faithfully, LOUISE BURKE, 10 Grosvenor Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire, September 11.

PM's salary

From Mrs S. Jackson

Sir, Tony Blair may be able to afford to forgo a pay increase when his income is supplemented by the high earnings of a QC (report, September 17). But is it fair of him to expect others to take his lead when they may not be as fortunate?

Yours faithfully, SERENA JACKSON, 7 Hill View Cottages, Churchill, Oxfordshire, September 17.

The Booker booked

From Mr John O'Byrne

Sir, Now that the season of "Booker" is upon us (report, September 16) how about some enterprising first-time novelist attempting a grand theme on the prize itself?

The ingredients could include obsession, thwarted ambition, rejection, loss, disillusionment, and some damn close-run things. But what should be the title?

Yours literally, JOHN O'BYRNE, 2 Mount Argus Court, Harold's Cross, Dublin, September 16.

Tills apart

From Mr Colin Croskin

Sir, It is somewhat pedantic of Professor Maxwell Gaskin to say in his letter (September 11) that I was "wrong" in stating that Scottish banks issue banknotes with the permission of the Bank of England (letter, September 2).

Every banknote issued by Scottish and Northern Irish banks has to be backed pound for pound by Bank of England notes, special £1 million notes being used for this purpose.

So these banks are hardly free agents.

Yours sincerely, COLIN CROSKIN, 4 Highfield Cottages, Ingelton, North Yorkshire, ccroskin@compuserve.com, September 12.

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In faith we trust

From Mr Alan Challoner

Sir, In his letter of September 16, Mr Barry Holroyd writes that "when people stop believing in God... they then start believing in anything", and goes on to ridicule some of the belief objects that have turned up in a university survey — the impression being given that a belief in God is the only avenue for personal and spiritual survival.

This is of course not true. Many people have eschewed religion (as a prop) and have come to believe in themselves.

Such people have developed a faith in their own abilities to examine the world in which we live and, having done so, have realised that it is better to stand on their own two feet than it is to wait for miracles.

Yours faithfully, ALAN CHALLONER, 13 The Village, Bodelwyddan, Denbighshire, September 17.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

OBITUARIES

THE REV J. S. WHALE

The Rev J. S. Whale, former Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council and sometime Headmaster of Mill Hill School, died on September 17 aged 100. He was born on December 19, 1896.

Among the Nonconformist divines of his time, J. S. Whale may not have been the best known — figures such as Leslie Weatherhead, W. E. Sangster or Donald Soper were always far more household names. But, as a survivor from the age when Nonconformity was still a power in the land, he could claim, through the intellectual cutting-edge of Congregationalism, to have helped to provide the Free Churches with academic respectability.

He was a distinguished historian and theologian, particularly highly regarded in Oxford, Cambridge and in the United States. His intellectual influence reached well beyond the parameters of one denomination. His 1941 *Christian Doctrine*, in particular, was frequently reprinted and remained in regular use in Anglican theological colleges for more than fifty years.

But, earlier, his gifts had seemed to be more popular ones. There was a moment when it almost seemed as if he might become the heir to Charles Spurgeon. Although born too late to enter fully into the great Nonconformist preaching inheritance, he was a genuine master of the pulpit, possessing great dramatic gifts, a lucid mind and the authentic accent of authority. If he rejected that route to fame, it was probably because he came to despise it.

John Seldon Whale was himself the son of a Congregational minister and went to a Congregational school in Caterham. His First World War service was spent in the best dissenting-pacifist tradition: he worked for the YMCA, the Friends' Ambulance Unit (partly on a hospital ship) and for the Serbian Relief Fund.

At St Catherine's Society, Oxford, after the war he obtained a first in history before training for the ministry, again in Oxford, at the then Congregationalist Mansfield College. After four years,



A portrait of the Rev J. S. Whale by P. K. C. Jackson that hangs at Mill Hill School

1925-29, as minister of the influential Bowdon Downs Congregational Church on the outskirts of Manchester, he returned to Mansfield College to teach church history.

From there he moved to Cambridge to train Congregational ministers at Chesham College, of which he was President from 1933 to 1944. In retrospect, as recognised by his honorary DD from Glasgow in 1938, these were his

peak years, when his skills as a writer, lecturer and broadcaster first came to the fore.

His reputation as a preacher had already been established (on hearing him once in the 1920s even Lloyd George — no mean connoisseur in these matters — was heard to remark that he had discovered "a pulpit genius"). Increasingly, however, his pulpit certainties came to contrast with his private doubts.

He served as Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council in 1942-43 and, as such, often stood alongside Archbishops William Temple and Cyril Garbett on declarations of Christian principle arising out of the ethical issues posed by the Second World War.

In November 1942 he wrote directly to Winston Churchill to protest against the practice — which the British Government had brief-

ly adopted — of manning German prisoners of war.

In 1944, when the flow of prospective Congregational ministers to Chesham had very nearly dried up, he caused some surprise by accepting the headmastership of Mill Hill, a public school of Congregationalist foundation but increasingly viewed as non-denominational. He was later to regard this move as a mistake but he certainly revived the academic tradition of the school, which had been damaged by a wartime evacuation to Cumberland. Not surprisingly, he felt more at home with the sixth form than he did with most other groups, including the staff and the governing body (with the latter his relations were not always easy). With some relief, he laid down what he had increasingly come to see as a burden after seven years.

Once he had left Mill Hill, Whale never took a full-time academic post again, nor did he return to the pastoral ministry. This caused some disappointment to his admirers — but the truth probably was that his most durable achievements, and certainly his own greatest satisfaction, lay in prose. In addition to *Christian Doctrine* (1941), he wrote two further substantial works, *The Protestant Tradition* (1955) and *Victor and Victim: The Christian Doctrine of Redemption* (1960). He combined writing both these books with preaching and teaching (often via visiting professorships or lectureships) in North America, where his fame — at least at Protestant institutions of learning — had by the 1960s probably outgrown that which he had known in Britain even in his heyday.

After the end of his American period — he did not appear much on university campuses in the United States after 1968 — Whale led an increasingly reclusive life on Dartmoor until his own, and his wife's, increasing infirmity forced a move to an Edinburgh nursing home to be near their daughter.

He is survived by his wife Mary, one of his two daughters, and two of his three sons, the elder of whom became an Anglican and was Editor of the *Church Times* from 1989 to 1995.

RED SKELTON

Red Skelton, comic actor, died on September 17 aged 84. He was born in Indiana on July 18, 1913.



IT WAS an accidental fall off the stage while auditioning for a part in a travelling medicine show that brought about Red Skelton's comic persona, one that would ultimately sustain a career as America's best-known clown for nearly seven decades. Breaking several bottles of medicine on his way down, his fall drew big laughs, and Skelton was recruited to repeat it. Bumbling pratfalls became the cornerstone of his routine, and he continued to perform them well into middle age, despite suffering from fractured knees as a result.

His innate flexibility combined with a rubber face and superb comic timing virtually guaranteed that audiences would dissolve into laughter during his routines. What was surprising was that Skelton, often amused by his own antics, would stop his own act to join them in their mirth. He once remarked that laughter overcame him so often he rarely went to funerals for fear of disgracing himself.

A clown and comedian who survived the transition from vaudeville to radio and then to the big screen, Skelton typified the kind of entertainer for whom the show always went on.

Richard Bernard Skelton, nicknamed Red on account of his red hair, was born in the town of Vincennes, Indiana, two months after the death of his father, who had once performed as a clown with the Hagenbeck and Wallace circus. The Skelton family was destitute, and the young Red began working at seven to contribute to the family finances. He delivered newspa-

pers for three years before joining a travelling medicine show, honing and perfecting his act. By the age of 15, having mastered the pratfall and developed a stock of comic characters, Skelton hit the vaudeville circuit.

He made his debut on radio and on Broadway in 1937, but early attempts to conquer Hollywood did not prosper after he failed a screen test. Incredibly, it was eating doughnuts that landed him a second chance for a life on the silver screen.

During the mid-1930s he developed a sketch that had him eating 12 doughnuts in various poses. After three shows a day and a weight gain of two and a half stone, Skelton caught the attention of the child star Mickey Rooney, who, taking pity on him, recommended him to MGM.

He went on to appear in numerous MGM comedies, including *Having Wonderful Time*, *Watch the Birdie*, and *Whistling in Brooklyn*, which saw him pitching against the Brooklyn Dodgers. Among his

last films was *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines* (1963).

But it was on television that Skelton gave flight to his most famous comic characters, among them Hayseed Clem Kadiddlehopper, Freddie the Freeloader, Cauliflower McGugg, the drunken Willie Lump-Lump, the con artist San Fernando and the cross-eyed seagulls Gertrude and Heathcliff.

Skelton's television career began on NBC in 1951 with a sketch comedy show that ran in varying guises until 1970, when he was unceremoniously taken off the air. Television executives said they believed the vaudeville-trained comic was too dated for the medium.

In 1945 Skelton married Georgia Davis and they had a daughter and a son, who died of leukemia aged nine. His marriage ended in divorce, as had his first in 1943. Skelton married his third wife, Lohian, in 1973. She survives him, together with the daughter of his first marriage.

BRIGADIER BERNARD COWEY

Brigadier Bernard Cowey, DSO, OBE, Commander 9th Armoured and 148th Infantry Brigades, TA, 1956-58, died on August 20 aged 85. He was born on November 20, 1911.

"BUN" COWEY, as he had been nicknamed in childhood, had an outgoing personality and was a natural leader. An outstanding sportsman, he played rugby for Newport, London Welsh, the Army and the Barbarians, and won four Welsh caps. Playing against England in 1934 and 1935, and against Scotland and Ireland in 1934, he scored three tries as a right wing three-quarter.

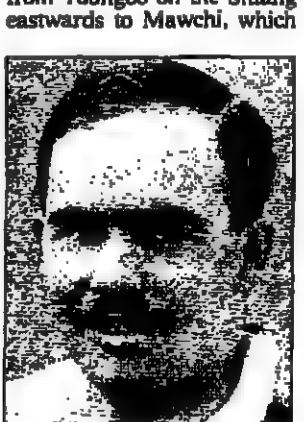
He captained the Welsh Regiment's famous 1st Battalion rugby XV when they won the Army Cup in 1935, 1937 and 1939. In 1935 he was a member of the 1st Battalion's 4 x 400 yd relay team, composed of the rugby XV's three-quarter line, when they broke the Army record for the event.

His renown as a military leader came when he won his DSO commanding the 2nd Battalion of his regiment in Burma in May 1945. He had taken over the battalion in February near Imphal in a tired and battle-weary state and had restored its morale almost from the moment of his first talk to the troops assembled around him.

2nd Welch were part of Major-General "Pete" Rees's 19th Indian Division advancing on Mandalay from the north on the east bank of the Irrawaddy. Cowey's first notable engagement was at Maymyo, where he successfully cut the Japanese withdrawal route with a long outflanking night march up steep hillsides. His ambush destroyed some forty supply vehicles carrying cash, ration and, to the Japanese, precious vehicle spares, tyres and petrol. It was estimated to have shortened the fighting in that area by two months.

The action, for which he won his DSO, took place

towards the end of the campaign in May 1945 when the remnants of the Japanese army were trying to escape across the Sittoung River eastwards towards the borders of Burma. "Bunforce", an all-arms group based upon 2nd Welch under Cowey's command, was to clear the road from Toungoo on the Sittoung eastwards to Mawchi, which



the Japanese were desperately trying to keep open, using a series of anti-tank gun blocks in depth along it. In six days of some of the hardest fighting of the campaign, calling for great courage, tactical skill and dogged determination under incessant monsoon rain, Bunforce cleared six miles of well-defended blocks, capturing 12 guns in the process; they were only stopped by three blown bridges.

Bernard Turing Vionnée Cowey was not a Welshman. His father, Lieutenant-Colonel R.V. Cowey, was a Channel Islander, and his mother was Dutch. Educated at Wellington and Sandhurst, he hoped to join a Scottish regiment, but the Welch Regiment were looking for rugby-playing talent and persuaded him to join them. When it came to selection for international sides, his successes captaining the Welch Regiment's XV was enough for Wales rather than Scotland to claim him. They were fortunate to have done so because he scored the winning try against Scotland in 1934. Commissioned into the

Besides playing rugby, he was a capable horseman with an interest in Arab bloodstock. He became show director of the Arab Horse Show, 1968-81, and bred and owned five racehorses. He chaired the Army Rugby Union Referees Society, 1963-73, and was the East Midlands regional secretary of the British Field Sports Society from 1975 to 1983. He was regional organiser of the Army Benevolent Fund.

He married Margaret Heath Dean (née Godwin) in 1947. They had no children. He was widowed in 1994.

JAMES DUNNACHIE

James Dunnachie, Labour MP for Glasgow, Pollok, 1987-97, died of cancer on September 7 aged 66. He was born on November 17, 1930.

IN THE Commons for a decade, Jimmy Dunnachie was one of the last blue-collar workers to become a Labour MP. He was a shop steward for most of the 34 years he spent as an engineering worker and, like many other Glasgow MPs, he entered the

House through Scottish local government.

A heavily-accented Glaswegian, warm-hearted and popular, active in an almost obsessive degree in causes he cared about, he seemed to have entered national politics almost as an afterthought. He did not join the Labour Party until he was 36 and it was more than 20 years later that he decided to stand for Parliament. He was chosen then for the east-iron Labour seat of Pollok, though he only just

beat off a strong challenge from a Militant candidate at the all-important selection conference.

Militant mounted another challenge to him in 1992, when Tommy Sheridan, the Scottish anti-politax campaigner, stood against him from the prison cell where he was serving a six-month sentence. Sheridan secured more than 6,000 votes and finished in second place.

Redistribution cut the number of Glasgow seats from

eight to seven at this year's election. Dunnachie, who was expected to retire, made a sudden bid to become the candidate for the new Govan seat; his intervention was one of the factors which enabled the controversial Mohammed Sarwar to be selected.

James Francis Dunnachie was Glaswegian and was educated at St Margaret's School at Kinning Park. The son of a ship's fitter, he followed his father to a yard on the Clyde before joining Rolls-Royce. His union activities led to progress in local government, where he served on Glasgow City Council, Glasgow District Council and Strathclyde Regional Council, before he attained at the age of 56 a seat at Westminster.

In the House, where he rose to be an Opposition whip (serving as Scottish whip under Derek Foster between 1989 and 1992) he tended to be on the left, though on social matters he represented orthodox Glasgow Roman Catholic feeling. He supported abortion-curtailing Bills and was one of only seven Labour MPs who voted against any reduction in the homosexual age of consent. He was equally passionate about children's access to gambling machines, fluoridation of water, using animals for cosmetics research and the exploitation of children generally.

He was married in 1974 to Isabel Payne, who survives him.

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LONDON TOURIST CENTRE 0171 262 2009	FARESAVERS MALAGA 1950 GREECE 1950 01476 592095	LEGAL NOTICES Sunday Business Newspaper 01476 404747	LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE 0171-680 6878 OR FAX: 0171-481 9313
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STEEL RAILWAY CARRIAGES

Yesterday, at the invitation of the Brush Electrical Engineering Company (Limited), a number of Press representatives and others visited the Metropolitan District Railway car depot at Mill-hill-park to inspect the first steel railway carriage constructed in this country. Steel railway carriages have been running for several years in the United States, and those on the New York Subway have, as it is stated, proved so satisfactory that the whole of the wooden stock on that line will in course of time be displaced by steel. Six steel railway carriages have also been running for more than two years on the Central London Railway. These, however, were a product of the United States; and it was not until recently that the Brush Electrical Engineering Company undertook to supply an all-steel railway carriage to the Underground Electric Railways of London for trial service on the Great Northern, Piccadilly and Brompton Railway. The new railway carriage has been built to the designs of Mr. G.C. Cunningham, M.Inst.C.E., general manager of the Central London Railway, who, it is stated, has been successful in making several important improvements on American practice in the

ON THIS DAY

September 19, 1905

For many years the bodies of railway carriages were made of wood. In serious accidents there could be "telescoping" of coaches which were sometimes smashed to matchwood causing many casualties. There was also the ever-present danger of fire.

British-made carriage. The new railway carriage is claimed to be superior to the standard wooden car in three respects. The first is its absolute immunity from any danger of fire; the second, a considerable reduction in dead weight; and the third consists in the material reduction it will effect in expense of haulage. It is pointed out that railway rolling stock of the standard types, especially dining, sleeping, and corridor coaches, is tending to become more spacious, and consequently heavier. The cost of the steam or electricity required to propel each ton of rolling stock in regular service is an important feature in

the railway economy. On the London underground lines, for instance, this is estimated at £25 per ton per annum, and the reduction in the weight of a coach by, say, three tons would consequently represent a saving on that coach alone of £75 a year. The Brush Electrical Engineering Company estimate that a saving of about 20 per cent in the weight of standard type of wooden railway coach will be effected by the substitution of steel carriages, and point out that, as there are over a million goods and passenger vehicles on British railways, there is ample prospect of a substantial reduction in running costs.

The steel carriage built by the Brush Electrical Engineering Company is formed of a steel frame with a body of pressed and riveted steel sheets. The sides have a slight outward curve, and are prettily decorated in red and white; the car certainly presents a tasteful and even elegant appearance. Its length over platforms is 49ft. 9½ in., its height from rail to roof 9 ft. 5½ in., its interior has a perpendicular of 7ft. 6 in., whilst its extreme width is 8ft. 9 in. The seating capacity of the car is 54, and its total weight 15 tons 17 cwt. against the 21 tons 5 cwt. of the Metropolitan District Railway coaches seating 52 passengers and the 18 tons 16 cwt. of the coaches of the Great Northern and City Railway seating 58 passengers ...

NEWS

BBC backs down over changes

The BBC backed down yesterday over proposed changes to television and radio news after a wave of protest from key presenters and editors.

Sir Christopher Bland, Chairman of the BBC Board of Governors, intervened to suspend the moves as Tony Hall, the BBC's chief executive of news, admitted that neither the governors nor John Birt, the Director-General, had been fully apprised of the detail of the changes before they were announced. Pages 1, 2

Tourists flee Cairo after attack

Hundreds of British tourists were evacuated from Cairo as the city was unofficially declared a no-go area for foreign holidaymakers after suspected Muslim militants attacked a tourist bus, killing ten people and wounding 19. Pages 1, 13.

Churchill restoration

The humble grave of Sir Winston Churchill and the quiet English churchyard where he is buried are to receive a £350,000 refurbishment. Pages 1, 5

Warnock death

Baroness Warnock, a member of the Archbishop of Canterbury's advisory group on medical ethics, revealed how her husband was helped to die by a doctor who advocates euthanasia. Page 3

Palace intruder

Detectives are investigating how an intruder spent seven hours in Kensington Palace without being detected. The man was a convicted crack cocaine dealer with a mental illness. Page 6

Milk saves runaway

A teenaged runaway was rescued from a life of heroin addiction after her photograph was printed on tins of thousands of milk cartons. Page 7

Road hazard

The motor industry was attacked for doing too little to tackle air pollution or to counter the macho motoring culture which prizes big high-performance cars. Page 8

Hindley attack

A controversial portrait of the Moors murderer Myra Hindley in the Royal Academy of Arts' *Sensation* exhibition was attacked by two protesters when the show opened. Page 9

Modesty blamed for council cover-up

So many male members of a council were distracted during meetings by the legs of their female colleagues that a councillor insisted desks should be fitted with "modesty" curtains. East Riding council has spent £645 on the cover-up after a Liberal Democrat, Dave Ireland, said his colleagues spent their time voting on who had the best legs. Page 1

Video game addicts

Almost one in four teenagers fears becoming addicted to fantasy video games, with around ten per cent spending more than 30 hours a week in front of the computer, says a survey. Page 10

CIA meal of spying

The CIA has produced a cookbook of covert recipes designed to give the persecuted spy agency greater public appeal on its 50th anniversary. Page 11

Saturn launch

The century's last great planetary probe — and the biggest spacecraft to be sent to the outer solar system — is ready for launch to Saturn. Page 11

Summit soothing

The German Government played down harmful comments by Klaus Kinkel, the Foreign Minister, about the single European currency as the Franco-German summit began. Page 12

Uganda child slaves

Ugandan children are being forced to take up arms and serve as sex slaves by rebels who aim to rule according to the Ten Commandments. Page 14

Chinese change

The third most powerful man in China's leadership, the seemingly liberal Qiao Shi, was dropped from the Communist Party central committee as Jiang Zemin solidified his power. Page 15



Jessica Griffiths arrives at Capel-y-Ffin polling station in Wales's Black Mountains to vote in yesterday's devolution referendum

BUSINESS

Pensions cost: The costs of compensating those missed personal pensions could be far higher than the £4 billion estimate. Page 23

Accountants to merge: Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse have confirmed plans for a merger to create the biggest accounting firm in the world. Page 23

Pit closures: Coal unions may force the early closure of some pits owned by RJB Mining as part of a battle over redundancy entitlements worth an estimated £65 million. Page 23

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index rose 33.1 points to close at 5046.2. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 99.5 to 100.6 after a rise from \$1.6024 to \$1.6157 and from DM2.8327 to DM2.8612. Page 26

SPORT

Cricket: Kent, who started the final round of county championship games one point behind the leaders Glamorgan, took a first-innings lead of 93 over Surrey at Canterbury. Page 44

Motor racing: Damon Hill, who was dropped by the Arrows team, is set to sign for Jordan, where he will partner Ralf Schumacher next season. Page 44

Football: Bruce Grobbelaar and Hans Segers could still be banned from the game for life after being charged with breaking the Football Association's betting rules. Page 38

Sailing: Lawrie Smith was officially confirmed as director of sailing for Great Britain's America's Cup campaign for Auckland in 2000. Page 42

ARTS

Teasdale's legacy: "I doubt whether I shall ever encounter another conductor so capable of embodying the frailty of man and the greatness of mankind," says Richard Morrison about Klaus Tennstedt, who is gravely ill. Page 31

Guarded enthusiasm: The new West End musical, *Enter the Guardsman*, gets a muted fanfare of welcome from Benedict Nightingale. Page 31

Pop on Friday: Caitlin Moran talks to The Sundays; David Sinclair reviews the new album from the Icelandic chanteuse Björk. Plus reviews and Top Ten. Page 32-33

West Brown humour: Frank Skinner, comedian and incurable West Bromwich Albion supporter, has embarked on a tour. Page 34

FEATURES

Thief of arts: It was called America's art theft of the century. The FBI think they know who did it, but not where the spoils are. However, a Boston journalist may have the answer. Page 16

Political couple: Dorian Jabri talks for the first time about his private and political partnership with Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Page 17

Here and there: John O'Leary looks at discontent over Whitehall control of schools, while Mark Whitaker reports on a radical experiment in Chicago. Page 35

Question of grammar: Many students lack the basic equipment to build a proper sentence, says Susan Elkin. Page 35

EDUCATION

Half-way good news from Oslo, where nearly one hundred countries have agreed to a treaty banning landmines. The signatories promise never to use, develop, produce, store, advertise or distribute anti-personnel mines. If the pact is ratified in December there is a chance that one of the most horrific weapons will be phased out. — *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*

Come September: Chris Barton, Professor of Family Law at Staffordshire University, describes the start of a new term. Page 35

THE PAPERS

Half-way good news from Oslo, where nearly one hundred countries have agreed to a treaty banning landmines. The signatories promise never to use, develop, produce, store, advertise or distribute anti-personnel mines. If the pact is ratified in December there is a chance that one of the most horrific weapons will be phased out. — *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*

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TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

MAGAZINE

GROWING UP WITH THE MOB: VICTORIA GOTTI ON HER MAFIA FATHER

METRO

GOING WILDE FOR JENNIFER EHLE: ALAN JACKSON IS ENTRANCED WITH THE STAR PLAYING OSCAR'S WIFE

MAGAZINE

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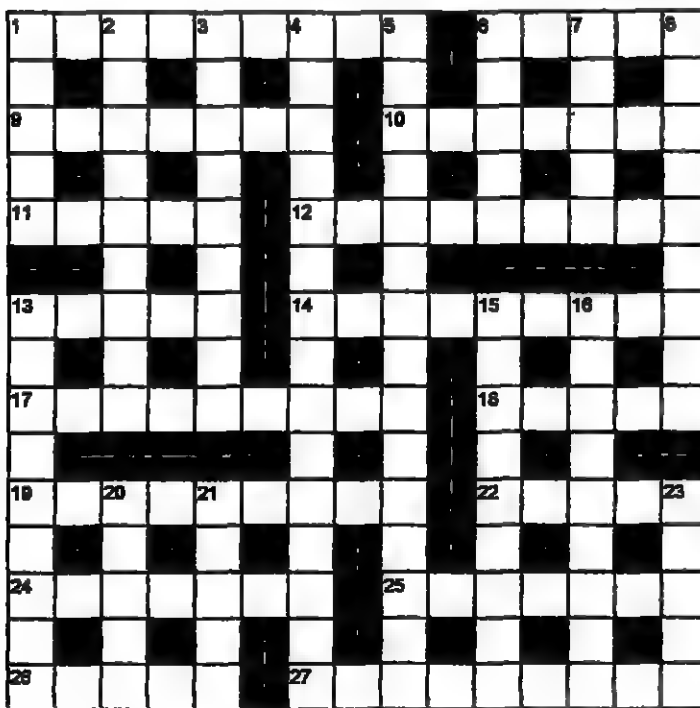
MAGAZINE

GROWING UP WITH THE MOB: VICTORIA GOTTI ON HER MAFIA FATHER

MAGAZINE

GROWING UP WITH THE MOB: VICTORIA GOTTI ON HER MAFIA FATHER

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,589



- ACROSS**
- Medusa taking dessert before main course (9).
 - Flourish in suit (5).
 - Almost unworthy of being included in a little trinket (7).
 - Chatter about one very averse to publicity (7).
 - It's installed up front in truck and compasses honest operation (5).
 - English very, very good, zealously advocating cause (9).
 - Brass money, old and new, withdrawn (5).
 - Calibre is incorrect, with a short fuse (9).
 - Passed a range of knowledge on to public (9).
 - A maiden to keep supplying generously (5).
 - Old object thrown to drop around female and cause confusion (9).
- DOWN**
- One given accommodation by fat landowner (5).
 - Best employed in little drink (7).
 - Best be silent on short measure of drink (7).
 - Grand piano blemished, to some extent (5).
 - Nearly let out for ever (9).
 - Write briefly about Jack's ornamental fruit (5).
 - Lofts partners utilise for making stew (9).
 - Most chicken's so well cooked on the outside, however (9).
 - Imprisoned frequently, I am finally free at critical moment (2,3,4,2,4).
 - Eternal optimist will produce strife within author's family (4,7,4).
 - Ask about popular person (5).
 - Pimsy basket (5).
 - They care surprisingly about sovereign's infidelity (9).
 - Foil employer, perhaps, who wants to avoid strike (9).
 - Daily, part of Africa turns up fraud (9).
 - Psalm a bit unusual at christening (9).
 - Rosemary or Heather, say, mixed drink (5).
 - Nothing charged for fruit (5).
 - Inactive bridge player leading one to expect pass (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,588

ACROSS: 1. MEDUSA, 2. FLOURISH, 3. ALMOST, 4. CHATTER, 5. IT'S, 6. ENGLISH, 7. BRASS, 8. CALIBRE, 9. PASSED, 10. A MAIDEN, 11. OLD OBJECT, 12. FORTUNE, 13. MEDUSA, 14. FLOURISH, 15. ALMOST, 16. CHATTER, 17. IT'S, 18. ENGLISH, 19. BRASS, 20. CALIBRE, 21. PASSED, 22. A MAIDEN, 23. OLD OBJECT, 24. FORTUNE, 25. MEDUSA, 26. FLOURISH, 27. ALMOST.

DOWN: 1. MEDUSA, 2. FLOURISH, 3. ALMOST, 4. CHATTER, 5. IT'S, 6. ENGLISH, 7. BRASS, 8. CALIBRE, 9. PASSED, 10. A MAIDEN, 11. OLD OBJECT, 12. FORTUNE, 13. MEDUSA, 14. FLOURISH, 15. ALMOST, 16. CHATTER, 17. IT'S, 18. ENGLISH, 19. BRASS, 20. CALIBRE, 21. PASSED, 22. A MAIDEN, 23. OLD OBJECT, 24. FORTUNE, 25. MEDUSA, 26. FLOURISH, 27. ALMOST.

LOCAL INFORMATION

LATEST NEWS AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

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EU Weather: All regions 0330 444 910

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PDS and Link Roads 0330 444 910

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Hours of darkness 0330 444 910

Sun times 0330 444 910

Moon times 0330 444 910

Last quarter September 23 0330 444 910

London 7:06 pm to 6:43 am 0330 444 910

Bristol 7:06 pm to 6:53 am 0330 444 910

Manchester 7:15 pm to 6:51 am 0330 444 910

Perthshire 7:27 pm to 7:05 am 0330 444 910

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INSIDE SECTION

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TODAY



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sees sterling protect
Britain from EMU
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ARTS

Even Spice Girls do
it: welcome to the
world of sampling
PAGES 31-34



SPORT

Hill rewarded
for driving a
hard bargain
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TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 19 1997

Unions threaten RJB pit closures to secure payoffs



Budge: rolling contract

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE coal unions may force the early closure of some pits owned by RJB Mining as part of a battle over redundancy entitlements worth an estimated £65 million.

The unions fear that employees of RJB will miss out on redundancy packages worth up to £27,000 for miners and up to £60,000 for colliery managers because the company has not made progress in crucial contract talks with the generators and has not yet set out plans for its future. The severance schemes, inherited from

British Coal, finish with the expiry at the end of March of the government-arranged coal contracts with the electricity generators.

RJB last month closed the Asfordby superpit but offered jobs in other pits for most of the 450 miners. The firm could launch a redundancy programme on April 1 and be allowed to pay only the statutory redundancy. This is a maximum of £6,000 but is likely to average £4,000 for RJB workers. If — as industry insiders forecast — renegotiation of the electricity contracts lead to five or six pits closing, then the redundancy cash at stake is more than £65 million.

Union leaders are pressing Richard Budge, chief executive of RJB, both for fresh redundancy terms and progress on the contract negotiations.

One union leader said: "If we get to Christmas and there is no deal signed then we could see pit closures forced by the employees to secure the payments."

Another industry source said: "There are bound to be closures because the market doesn't need the quantity of coal that RJB has."

The market for coal is declining as more electricity generation comes from gas. The renegotiation of the March 1998 contracts are crucial but

RJB faces increasing competition from cheap imports and small mining companies. It is believed that RJB is nowhere near a deal with any of the three major generators. Mr Budge, who is on an 18-month rolling contract earning £299,280, is said to be sticking to a tough price for the coal while calling on government help to extend the coal contracts.

Mr Budge inherited redundancy liabilities under the Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employment regulations, a European provision to maintain employees' terms and conditions.

Neil Greatrex, president of the

Union of Democratic Miners, said: "There is an increasing concern that is going around the industry that redundancies will be made after March 31 and the employees will lose the rights they had." Mr Greatrex said he has tried to raise the issue with John Battle, Energy Minister, but has not been able to get a meeting. The Department of Trade and Industry would not comment.

RJB said: "The issue of redundancies is not one we are looking at because there are no plans for redundancies at present. Until we have renegotiated the contracts we don't know our production requirements."

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5048.2	(+35.1)
FTSE All share	2370.17	(+13.5)
Nikkei	17930.09	(+248.82)
Dow Jones	7987.70	(+101.28)
S&P Composite	954.89	(+11.89)

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Long Bond	100 1/8%	(95 1/2%)
Yield	6.37%	(6.36%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month Interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Life long gilt	117 1/2%	(117 1/2%)

STERLING

New York	1.8080*	(1.8020)
London	1.8161	(1.8022)
DM	2.8618	(2.8326)
FF	0.6124	(0.5911)
SFR	2.3591	(2.3264)
Yen	197.21	(192.47)
Index	100.0	(98.5)

US DOLLAR

London	1.7828*	(1.7716)
DM	5.9795*	(5.9510)
SFR	1.4651*	(1.4613)
Yen	121.72*	(120.34)
Index	100.0	(105.1)

Tokyo close Yen 121.25

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Dec)	£18.80	(N/A)
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GOLD

London close	£320.85	(£320.65)
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* denotes midday trading price

Pirates

The booming British music industry is being exploited by international music pirates who are illegally producing CDs worth an estimated £3.1 billion each year. Page 24

Merger cost

Sun Life & Provincial, which merged with AXA Equity & Law two months ago to form the third-largest group in the UK life and pensions market, spent £48 million on the deal. Page 28

Pensions mis-selling costs will top £4bn

By CAROLINE MERRELL

THE costs to life insurers of compensating those that have been mis-sold personal pensions could be far higher than the original £4 billion estimate.

The soaring compensation cost figures emerged as Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, revealed that a further 1.5 million pension mis-selling victims have yet to be identified.

Figures from the Personal Investment Authority show that, so far, the industry has offered more than £452 million of compensation to only 73,000 victims — an average of £6,000 per case. An estimated further 100,000 have yet to be compensated from a total of nearly 600,000 priority cases. Work on finding the extra 1.5 million non-priority cases, highlighted by Mrs Liddell, has not even started for many companies. The two million total means that around a quarter of those with personal pensions could have been mis-sold a policy.

City experts have calculated that, if only a third of these two million cases require compensation, the bill for the industry will exceed £4 billion. Bacon & Woodrow, the leading firm of actuaries working on mis-selling claims, yesterday agreed that costs of compensation could top the £4 billion estimate.

The compensation process has already begun to take a heavy toll on the balance sheets of some of the UK's biggest insurers. Prudential has put aside £450 million to pay compensation. Britannic has set aside £150 million, while AXA Equity & Law said yesterday that it had put aside £32 million. Pearl, which has among the highest number of cases, has refused to reveal how much compensation could cost. However, it has paid out £500,000 on one case alone. Mrs Liddell said: "We actually do not know what the final amount is. It is a time bomb for many individuals." Those in the second group of non-priority cases will include many younger people, under the age of 35. Mrs Liddell

pointed out that many of these will have bought personal pensions believing that they were being financially prudent.

In an effort to keep up the pressure, Mrs Liddell named a further 17 firms yesterday that have high numbers of mis-selling cases. These included Standard Life, Albany Life, Axa Equity & Law, Commercial Union, and the three biggest networks of independent financial advisers — Burns Anderson, Countrywide and DBS.

Mrs Liddell has now named 41 firms that are the most guilty. She estimates they represent 83 per cent of all cases. In an effort to hasten the review, the Treasury now plans to publish figures on compensation each month. Mrs Liddell claims that her policy of "naming and shaming" the guilty companies has already had a significant effect on the speed of the review. She said: "The industry has now sat up and taken note of it. We have seen a massive upturn in activity."

The Prudential last week admitted that it was unlikely to meet its first deadline for compensating priority cases. She said: "I am very disappointed at the Pru."

The Pru said some of the delay had been caused by the mis-allocation of 8,000 cases. A Pru spokesman said: "We are disappointed that we are likely to miss the deadline."

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Commentary, page 25



Liddell: "a time bomb"



Do it yourself: Bill Grimsey, chief executive of Wickes, announced that he intends to move the company further into mainstream DIY retailing

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

Wickes unveils the future

WICKES, the DIY retailer, yesterday attempted to draw a line under last year's accounting scandal as it unveiled a four-year plan to introduce new store formats and wider ranges. The company unveiled a pre-tax loss of £14.7 million for the six months to June 30 because of a £16 million write-

off of goodwill after the disposal of its continental operations last year. Operating profit of £3.65 million pleased the City, which marked the shares up 16 1/2 p to 196p. There is no interim dividend. The Serious Fraud Office is continuing to investigate former directors of

Wickes after uncovering of a £90 million-plus hole in its accounts.

Bill Grimsey, chief executive, said that he plans to move Wickes further into mainstream DIY retailing, while retaining its stake in the heavier, building materials end, in order to

build margins from the current 2.3 per cent to the industry average of 5 to 6 per cent.

The company will invest about £3 million in converting six stores to a new trial format, carrying a broader range in areas such as paints, walkovers and bathroom accessories, and will also invest in an upgraded information technology system.

Competition threat to creation of world's biggest accountant

By ROBERT BRUCE

COOPERS & LYBRAND and Price Waterhouse yesterday confirmed plans for a merger that will create the biggest accounting firm in the world. But the deal has still to clear regulatory hurdles in the UK and US.

A small team of fewer than a dozen is now working on proposals on which the two firms' 8,500 partners can vote before the end of the year.

If the partners vote it through, the new firm would replace Arthur Andersen as the global leader in accounting. Andersen's global fee

income in 1996 was \$9.5 billion (£5.9 billion). The combined 1996 figures for Coopers & Lybrand and Price Waterhouse amount to \$11.8 billion.

Anxious to avoid suggestions that US and UK competition authorities would be looking at the deal in detail, partners were emphasising the benefits of size to clients. Nicholas Moore, of Coopers, who would chair the proposed new firm, said that together the firms "will have global reach, the global strength and the integrated management structure" needed for success.

The deal faces scrutiny under US anti-trust legislation. In the UK, the Department of Trade and Industry was unable to say whether the Office of Fair Trading or the EU would examine the merger. The combined firm would audit more than half the companies in the FTSE 100.

The proposed new firm does not have a name. "Accountants are not terribly good at this," said Ian Brindle, deputy chairman of Price Waterhouse, Europe.

Shy of consent, page 27

Institutional apathy reigns despite 'fat-cat' controversy

By JASON NISSÉ

PRESSURE from the Cadbury Committee, the Association of British Insurers (ABI) and the National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF) for institutional investors to make their voices heard with companies has had little effect, research published today will show.

A comprehensive study of voting at annual shareholder meetings by Pirc, the City consultancy, has found that the average level of votes cast on motions which public companies put to shareholders increased by just 1.6 per cent between 1993 and 1996.

The report, to be presented at today's Pirc Conference on the Hampel Committee report into corporate governance, reveals that the average vote was 39.3 per cent last year despite institutions holding more than 80 per cent of shares in UK companies. The ABI and NAPF recommend that their members vote all their shares on all motions which companies put to shareholders.

Pirc found that the level of opposition to company motions had increased — however the average opposition has risen from 0.64 per cent to

only 1.07 per cent. No company motions were defeated at annual meetings in 1996.

Pirc said: "Although the level of institutional voting has risen only 2 per cent, there is a growing trend towards oppose and abstain votes, indicating a higher degree of scrutiny."

The research also shows that 95 per cent of institutions had developed corporate governance guidelines, but only a third actually communicated these guidelines to the companies in which they invest.

Commentary, page 25

Friedman says IMF ought to be abolished

By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

MILTON FRIEDMAN yesterday stunned delegates gathering in Hong Kong for the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund by claiming that the organisation should have been abolished 26 years ago.

The Nobel laureate — regarded as

the founding father of the monetarist economic doctrine that dominated British economics in the 1980s — also warned Europe that pressing ahead with monetary union could lead to the break-up of the European Union.

Professor Friedman, speaking in Hong Kong before today's opening meetings, argued that the IMF had long outlived its purpose. "It should

have been abolished in 1971 and if not then now," he said. "If you had a private enterprise whose function had disappeared it would go bankrupt and out of existence, but not a government organisation."

The IMF was founded immediately after the end of the Second World War to supervise fixed exchange rates established under the Bretton

Woods agreement. But this role disappeared after the dollar floated in 1971.

Professor Friedman, who preached free market capitalism for more than quarter of a century from his base at the University of Chicago, was scathing about the IMF's new role of offering cheap loans to governments that run into debt

problems, most recently bailing out Thailand with \$17 billion in bridging loans. He claimed that most of the governments "have exercised too much influence on their economies rather than too little" and the IMF "now does more harm than good".

Doubts on debt help, page 24
Commentary, page 25

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CBI offers manufacturers hope on exports

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE sharp decline in manufacturing export orders may be levelling off, the Confederation of British Industry said yesterday.

The CBI's September monthly trends survey provides the first tentative evidence that the manufacturing sector has weathered the worst of the damage caused by the strong pound.

Separate data also published yesterday shows money supply pressures easing slightly although economists said the slowdown is unlikely to prevent further rate rises.

Fewer manufacturers reported below aver-

age export orders in September, the CBI said, although order books remain very weak and close to the five-year low recorded last month.

Sudhir Junakur, associate director of economic analysis at the CBI, said: "Although our survey shows export demand still to be weak, there is just a hint from the figures that the sharp deterioration since June has levelled off." But economists cautioned that there is little sign of the sector benefiting greatly from the recent slide in the pound.

Total order books weakened because of a slight moderation in domestic demand and remain below normal for the sixth consecutive month. But the CBI said output growth

expectations are healthy while the strong pound continues to hold back inflation.

The latest raft of monetary statistics also sent mixed signals to the markets with lending figures showing some signs of slowdown but consumer credit figures rising.

Annual growth of M4, the measure of broad money supply, declined from 12 per cent to 11.6 per cent in August — although it remains above the old monitoring range of 3 to 9 per cent. M4 bank and building society lending declined from £4.2 billion to £4 billion, the lowest level for two years. But economists said this figure had been flattened by the effect of the gilt repo market.

Separate figures produced by the British

Bankers Association showed lending to individuals by the high street banks declining to £1.25 billion in August from £1.29 billion. The mortgage lending component rose £753 million, compared with a six-month average of £818 million, backing up other evidence that the housing boom is beginning to slow.

But the BBA measure of consumer credit surged to £499 million from £411 million in July. Building Society Association data also showed gross mortgage lending falling slightly in August to £2.14 billion, while net advances increased marginally to £1.13 billion.

Economic view, page 27

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Ernst & Young pays \$100m out of court

ERNST & YOUNG, the accountant, has agreed to pay \$100 million (£60 million) for its role in a 1990 US banking crisis. As auditor of a local insurer, Ernst & Young was implicated in the closure of 45 banks and credit unions in the state of Rhode Island. The crisis started with the failure of a small bank insured by the Ernst & Young client, which led to a state-wide run on deposits and the unexpected collapse of the insurer, whose reserves were depleted. Ernst & Young denies any wrongdoing and said it settled out of court because of the high cost of commercial litigation in the US. It claimed that part of the \$100 million was covered by its own insurance.

The accountant, the second-biggest in the US after yesterday's megamerger, is expected to report annual revenues of \$3.6 billion (£2 billion) at the end of this month. Of the big six accountancy firms, Ernst & Young has been hardest hit by US compensation settlements, according to the National Association of Securities and Commercial Law Attorneys. In the four years up to 1995, Ernst & Young had to pay \$400 million out of a total of \$1.1 billion.

Daiwa Securities raided

JAPAN'S financial scandal tripped up a third big brokerage firm yesterday as prosecutors raided Daiwa Securities and alleged the firm had made huge payoffs to the racketeer at the heart of the affair. Tokyo prosecutors alleged in a statement that Daiwa Securities had paid a total of 67.28 million yen (about £347,000) to Ryuzhi Kake, a *sokajya* corporate racketeer. Mr Kake is already under arrest for his alleged role in the payoff scandal, in which Nomura Securities, Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank and Yamaichi Securities are embroiled.

US trade deficit grows

RECORD imports helped by car purchases from Japan and falling exports pushed the US trade deficit up sharply in July. The Commerce Department said the shortfall in trade with the rest of the world jumped 24.7 per cent in July to \$10.34 billion from \$8.29 billion in June, much higher than the \$9.4 billion deficit expected by Wall Street economists. William Daley, the Commerce Secretary, said America had been performing well given the slower economic growth among its top trading partners. But he had some tough words for Japan.

Gas price cut inquiry

THE gas regulator is to investigate British Gas's planned nationwide price cuts in the wake of concern that they will discriminate against low-income fuel users. The cuts, which would mean £28 off an average annual bill, do not apply to customers on pre-payment meters. Campaigners claim competition is increasing the relative burden of fuel costs on low-income households. Suppliers say pre-payment customers cost more to service so they are not generally offered the same rates as direct debit customers and prompt payers.

Help for small firms

THE Government yesterday backed an innovative new way of financing small firms in a move aimed at improving the competitiveness of small and medium-sized companies. The endorsement of European-style mutual guarantee funds for small firms came after The Co-operative and Unity Trust banks said that they would be financing mutual trust guarantee societies as a means of generating finance for companies. The Co-op is to finance local societies with an initial loan fund of £5 million over the next three years.

Protean bid approach

PROTEAN, the engineering group, saw its shares soar from 135p to 180p after revealing that it had received an approach that may or may not lead to an offer being made for the company. A further announcement will be made as soon as possible, shareholders were promised. At last night's closing price Protean is worth almost £80 million on the stock market. In the year to March 31 the group made pre-tax profits of £8.7 million on sales of £81.1 million. The shares hit a peak of 272p in 1996 but have recently traded as low as 125p.

Toyota 'for France'

TOYOTA yesterday refused to confirm reports that it has decided to build a new small car for the European market in France despite intense lobbying efforts by Britain to land the project. Japanese press reports said the nation's biggest car-maker plans to locate the plant in northeastern France, but will manufacture engines for the 1,000-1,300 cc car at its existing factory at Burnaston, near Derby. A Toyota spokesman insisted that no decision had been reached.

Gains for troubled Cape

CONTROVERSY over its former asbestos mining activities in South Africa overshadowed a return to profit for Cape. The building materials group, in the first half, it faces asbestos-related disease claims from five South Africans formerly employed at a subsidiary that no longer exists. Cape typically spends £2 million to £3 million a year settling asbestos claims. Profits before tax were £4 million compared with a £19.7 million loss after one-off restructuring charges a year ago. The interim dividend is held at 3p, payable on November 14.

Chairman sells shares

THE chairman of European Telecom, the distributor of mobile phones and accessories, yesterday sold 4.9 million shares at 235p, raising about £11.5 million. The shares were floated last year at half that price. Warren Hardy said he sold the shares, representing about 15 per cent of the outstanding share capital, to expand the company's shareholder base and improve liquidity. He still owns 53.6 per cent of the company. The sale came as the company announced the appointment of Ian Lang, former President of the Board of Trade, as deputy chairman.

Pirates of the high Cs plunder £3.1bn

BY CHRIS AYRES

THE booming British music industry is being exploited by international music pirates who are illegally producing CDs worth an estimated £3.1 billion each year, according to an international copyright watchdog.

Many of the CDs, such as Oasis's *Be Here Now* and Spice by the Spice Girls, enter the black market only days after being released. The illegal production of CDs is often backed by international organised crime groups, such as the Chinese triads and the Russian, Bulgarian and Italian mafias.

The revelation will come as an embarrassment to the British music industry, which claimed that CDs were "unpirateable" when they were launched in the early 1990s. In those days, a CD manufacturing plant cost more than £30 million and needed to be housed in a large warehouse.

Now, a machine the size of a small filing cabinet costing only £350,000 can produce up to 5 million CDs a year. Over recent years the number of CD producing plants has exploded, with many running at undercapacity, especially in Bulgaria and China.

These factors, alongside a widespread feeling that legitimate CDs are overpriced, have allowed the black market to expand by 6 per cent over the past year, with further growth expected.

British based record companies, such as EMI and Polygram, now fear that the huge growth expected in foreign sales of British music will be felt mainly in the black market. A survey published earlier this week by Credit Suisse, the Swiss bank, suggested that foreign sales could double before 2002.

Nic Garnett, director general of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, said: "The amount of CDs being illegally produced is enormous. HMV in Oxford Street contains 1 million CDs at any one time. You would need 350 HMVs to get the amount of CDs pirated every year. That is how big the problem is."

The industry-funded IFPI yesterday unveiled a "zero tolerance" policy for CD piracy. It also announced the appointment of a head of enforcement, Iain Grant, the former head of the Hong Kong police narcotics division.

He said: "We need to go for the jugular, hit the big players and have a ruthless approach. When music pirates think about the IFPI I want them to think about jail sentences, confiscation of assets and of expensive and lengthy litigation."

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Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, arrives in Hong Kong today, determined to reinforce progress towards debt relief. At this week's meeting of Commonwealth finance ministers in Mauritius, he pledged that Britain would fulfil its promises made under the HIPC initiatives and British government sources said that they would immediately release about \$32 million (£20 million) that had been pledged to the IMF for debt relief.

But there is an increasing perception that the momentum behind HIPC has been lost.

The IFS finds that the average statutory tax rate for



Confident: Mark Pullen, left, the Geest finance director, with Ian Menzies-Gow

Geest chills out with 74% rise

BY CHRIS AYRES

GEEST, the chilled foods group that recently shed its volatile bananas business, lifted profits 74 per cent in the half year to July 5, from £7.3 million to £12.7 million. The shares rose 18p to 347p in response.

The company said it would continue to look for built-on acquisitions.

earnings per share up from 6.9p to 12.5p. The interim dividend will be increased for the first time in five years, from 3.7p to 4p, payable on December 31. The shares rose 18p to 347p in response.

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NatWest markets a compromise



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

The dismantling of NatWest Markets has begun. Operations in Australia and New Zealand are being auctioned and Hong Kong is next in line to be sold. As it signalled at the time of its depressing half-year results, NatWest has abandoned its grandiose ideas of being an international investment bank.

But it is not yet ready to admit total defeat. After all, since the idea of investment banking was espoused so enthusiastically by Lord Alexander and his amiable sidekick, Derek Wanless, there is a high degree of personal credibility at stake. The pair, currently to be found among the hordes of money men now thronging Hong Kong for the IMF, will not wish to be seen to be backtracking completely.

So the plan is to be a less than international investment bank, concentrating particularly on Europe, from a strong London base, and with a presence in the US. It is a strategy which smacks of compromise, rather than conviction. If NatWest is not competing with the international giants in investment banking, then it needs to be doing something different, not merely less.

Pulling out of certain countries will cheer the analysts and investors since it demonstrates the seriousness of the company's commitment to scale down

NatWest Markets and cut the asset exposure. But many would like to see Chip Kruger, the chap now in charge, effectively doing himself out of a job.

There would be takers for the whole caboodle. Earlier this month Commerzbank signalled its desire to spend more money on building its presence on the investment banking scene and some detected a subtle wink in the direction of NatWest.

Lord Alexander might have publicly spelt out his continuing commitment to the business, but what reasonable shareholder would blame him if he were to bow to a generous offer?

For the indications are that, both in the UK and the US, the difficulties are mounting. The US businesses from which Mr Kruger hailed are said to be finding the competition increasingly tough. And in London, the Hambro Magan acquisition has not turned out as planned. As a corporate finance boutique, it was a brilliant success, but as an adjunct of NatWest, it has quickly found that while the bankers may be bound by golden handcuffs, the clients are not.

Major companies such as BTR are taking their business elsewhere, influenced, no doubt, by the question marks that lurk over the bank. Their defection serves only to further reduce the sinking morale among staff. No wonder that innovative financier, George Magan, was to be found on the grouse moor at the beginning of this week rather than in the City.

Cracks appearing in the China syndrome

China is a disproportionate presence on the agenda at the current International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings in Hong Kong, yet not a single recognisable official has been seen. Just mention China and a hushed reverence descends.

A new World Bank report,

China 2020, was published to great fanfare yesterday but the lunch bordered on the farcical. Every time the Bank staff appeared to feel that a question might annoy Beijing, embarrassed giggles rippled down the podium and the reply was left to the one official who no longer has any dealings with China. The perfectly orthodox point that democracy breeds incentives and economic dynamism was batted back time and again. The Communist Party was described variously as a unifying force, a reforming force and even a "cohesive forum for discussion".

The Bank is an institution in strategic denial. There is real fear of China's massive economic potential and the Bank clearly feels that, only by feeding Beijing a diet of unquestioning praise, will the rest of the world have a chance of harnessing some of its

success to its own interests. Only by keeping out of politics will the Bank be allowed to nurse Beijing towards the economic reform that will eventually open its markets to the exporters of the industrialised world.

One of the most delicate tasks ahead is accomplishing China's accession to the World Trade Organisation. Negotiators from the world's largest trading powers keep offering tougher and tougher entry terms, knowing that they have only one chance to avoid handing China a long-term trading advantage. But this brinkmanship has its dangers. The last outcome anyone wants to see is China staying out, threatening a future of trade wars with no recognised framework for solving them. The Bank's China experts urged the world's rich countries to "get China in and do the fine-tuning

afterwards". And beyond the jockeying for economic advantages lies an unspoken gamble — that a China integrated into a liberalised world economy is more likely eventually to concede democratic reforms than an isolated China.

X underrated by institutions

Democracy is a right, but a rarity, particularly in the corporate world. But like the American electors — more than half of whom fail to vote in elections for Congress — institutional investors in the UK do not appreciate their rights.

Perc, the pension fund adviser, has found that despite all the noises made about corporate governance, when shareholders have the chance to register their views on the re-election of directors, share incentive plans and the like, less than two fifths of them bother to vote.

This is a pretty pathetic showing. Voting at AGMs could not be easier. There is no need to turn up, merely filling in a proxy

and popping it in the post will do the trick. It takes only a few minutes of an overpaid fund manager's time. And it is time well spent, because the manager will then have to think about the company in which he or she has invested millions of clients' money rather than just checking the share price.

Those fund managers who have not merely switched into auto-pilot and resorted to tracking the index generally like it to be thought that they have an interest in the long-term performance of companies. In that case, they should be voicing their opinions through the ballot and not just in private meetings with management, which, no doubt, is where most would claim to be demonstrating their level of interest.

Stocks — and shares

NAMING and shaming continues to put Helen Liddell in the public eye, but her strategy of putting pensions mis-sellers in the modern equivalent of the stocks is failing to impress the crowd. Far from throwing tomatoes, the punters are continuing to give their business to the companies Mrs Liddell so vigorously dresses down. The continuing inflow of funds must provide a comforting cushion against the Treasury Minister's lashes.

Mirror to launch online betting service with PA

By RAYMOND SNODDY, MEDIA EDITOR

THE Mirror Group is planning to launch an interactive online betting service in a joint venture with PA News, the national news agency, before the end of the year.

The service, to be known as "Sporting Life.com" will make available the sporting data from both Mirror Group newspapers and PA and will take bets on all sports. It is believed to be the first service of its kind in the UK.

The actual bets, involving Switch card transactions, or the equivalent, will be placed with City Index, the bookmaker. David Montgomery, chief executive of Mirror Group, said yesterday: "The aim was to launch related products off the back of the newspaper base. There is no point in having just a newspaper group any more."

He was speaking as the

Mirror Group, publisher of *The Mirror*, *Sunday Mirror* and *People*, announced record profits before tax and exceptional of £43.3 million in the six months to June 29, up 12 per cent from £39 million. Earnings per share before exceptional rose 10.5 per cent, to 7.4p, and the interim dividend represents an increase of 11.1 per cent, to 1.5p.

Mr Montgomery yesterday gave another example of a related new product for Birmingham Live, part of the Mirror Group's chain of local TV stations for cable, which had just purchased the right to show the old games of Aston Villa from 1992-97. "We have 110,000 homes already in the Birmingham area," Mr Montgomery said.

Sir Robert Clark, the Mirror chairman, said the group was well on its way to being a

broadly based media company, but the record results had been achieved by continuing to drive profits from its core products. These include *The Sporting Life* and the *Daily Record* in Scotland.

The group's core newspaper titles increased revenue from £264.6 million to £267.5 million and operating profit from £55.2 million to £57.1 million.

In particular, the relaunch of *The Mirror* had "progressively stabilised circulation and market share over its main competitor".

Losses at Live TV fell from £1.8 million to £1.2 million in the period, in spite of £1.2 million of extra costs in starting up new local stations. The Mirror Group promised to continue investing in its titles and brands.

Tempus, page 26

Financial services boost for Kwik-Fit

By CHRIS AYRES

AN unlikely combination of financial services and car maintenance helped to lift Kwik-Fit's pre-tax profits 17 per cent, from £21.5 million to £25.1 million, in the six months to August 31.

The company said that its telemarketing insurance business, set up two years ago with Alexander & Alexander, the US financial services

group, had contributed £3 million to profits, against the £900,000 loss it had made the previous year.

Kwik-Fit, which operates more than 1,000 sales and service outlets in Europe, also revealed that it had plans for 30 new repair centres throughout the UK plus a further 25 in The Netherlands and Belgium.

Sir Tom Farmer, the company's chairman, said: "This, together with

the further expansion of the tyre management programme and the telemarketing operation, will enable the group to make continued progress in all areas of our business."

Kwik-Fit also reported a 9 per cent rise in turnover from £220 million to £240 million, with earnings per share up from 5.5p to 10p. The company managed to shrug off the effect of high exchange rates, which reduced profits

at its Dutch subsidiary by about £1 million. The City reacted warmly, pushing up the company's share price 21½p to 306½p. Analysts, who had forecasted half-year profits of about £24 million, said they had lifted full-year expectations to £48 million. Kwik-Fit will pay an interim dividend of 2.35p (2.1p) on October 30.

Tempus, page 26

Smooth sailing for P&O Stena ruling

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND DOMINIC WALSH

GOVERNMENT officials indicated yesterday that there was no reason to delay a decision on the proposed cross-Channel ferry merger between P&O and Stena Line beyond the start of October.

Although European Commission sources cautioned that there were still unresolved issues, Margaret Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade, has indicated that Government and Commission decisions will be announced at the same time.

If the EC decides to go back to the companies for further information, that could set in train a process lasting another two months.

Lord Sterling of Plaistow, P&O chairman, said: "If they were going to turn it down completely they would probably have done it ages ago."

The comments came as P&O unveiled first-half pre-tax profits down from £134.7 million to £123.1 million as a result of £12.7 million reorganisation costs. The after-effects of the Channel Tunnel fire helped to boost operating profits from ferries



Sterling: hopeful

from £500,000 to £11.3 million, while Bovis Homes, which is to be floated off in November, more than doubled profits to £13.3 million.

Earnings per share declined from 15.7p to 14.6p, while the interim dividend is maintained at 13.5p.

Tempus, page 26

Hanover may seek ruling

By DOMINIC WALSH

HANOVER International, the fledgling hotel company that last month rebuffed an approach from Jarvis Hotels, is expected to ask the Takeover Panel to seek clarification from Jarvis of its intentions. There have been suggestions that Jarvis might launch a hostile bid.

Peter Eyles, executive chairman of Hanover, declined to be drawn yesterday. However, one City analyst said: "Eyles is unlikely to leave things in limbo. The obvious move is to persuade the Takeover Panel to ask Jarvis to make a statement."

The news came as Hanover reported first-half pre-tax profits up from £14,000 to £574,000 on the back of last August's £40 million acquisition of United Hotels Group. Turnover was up from £1.31 million to £4.44 million.

Mr Eyles announced that, as a result of the strong cashflow generated by the six new hotels, a maiden interim dividend of 0.5p would be paid on December 14.

He confirmed that the group continued to seek further acquisitions.

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With so many possibilities, it's important for us to know what you really want, so we can shape and develop our products accordingly.

That's why we're writing to our business customers in a national survey, to hear their thoughts and needs.

If you're not a customer, but would like to join in, simply call our survey hotline on FreeCall 0800 068 8060.

Or visit <http://www.cwcom.co.uk>



CABLE & WIRELESS

What can we do for you?

Albright makes £27.8m charge to cover cutbacks

By PAUL DURMAN

ALBRIGHT & WILSON, the chemicals company, is making a £27.8 million charge against its profits to cover redundancies, closures and other changes ordered by its new chief executive.

Paul Rocheleau, who took over on the retirement of Robin Paul two months ago, agreed he was making use of the new chief executive's prerogative, and said many of the changes would not normally be justified by being treated as exceptional items.

The charge, combined with

the strength of sterling, cut Albright's first-half pre-tax profits from £32 million to £1.6 million. The company said the underlying picture was much more positive, with operating profits rising from £34.6 million to £39.2 million, after stripping out currency effects.

In all, Albright is making about 100 people redundant with the closure of an old sulphuric acid plant in Whitehaven, Cumbria, and the numerous other cuts. £27.8 million charge also includes a £3.1 million write-down

of the group's investment in its Philippines associate, £3.5 million on environmental clean-up costs, and £3 million to introduce consistent stock accounting procedures.

Surfactants, which are used in detergents, was the best performing business, with profits recovering from £5.4 million to £8.3 million. The phosphates division saw its profits fall from £22.2 million to £15.2 million.

The company will pay a foreign income dividend of 2.35p (2.25p) to November 21.

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Investors ready for rough journey as futures expire

HANG on to your hats! It could be a rough ride for investors in the City today as they are forced to survive the combined effect of the expiry of the September financial future and "triple witching" hour in New York.

Brokers last night gave warning that it could lead to further volatility as fund managers and traders rush to close open positions ahead of the expiry deadline.

One US hedge fund got a taste of what things could be like when it tried to close a bear position in the FTSE 100 index September future. Once other traders got wind of it, they made life difficult by chasing the future sharply higher. It closed at 5,091, a premium of 45 points to the cash price, with a massive 20,000 contracts traded.

The underlying equity market continued to extend this week's gains with the help of another opening surge on Wall Street which carried the Dow Jones industrial average more than 130 points higher early on. It followed a subdued Philadelphia Fed business index. Sentiment in London was also supported by the latest CBI survey showing that the recent slide in export orders was tailing off.

But prices in London failed to hold their best levels and the FTSE 100 index finished 33.1 up at 5,046.2 as 821 million shares changed hands.

Will the Government relent and allow foreign shareholders to own more than 30 per cent of Rolls-Royce shares? The City certainly hoped so, which was one of the reasons for the 3 1/2 p rise to 237p yesterday. There is already some talk that the limit on foreign ownership may be raised to just under 50 per cent.

US buying saw Railtrack slip 35p to 844 1/2 p. Panmure Gordon, the broker, has set a target price of 950p a share.

BOC Group stood out with a rise of 27p at £11.04 after its health care arm Ohmeda withdrew an application submitted to the US Food & Drug Administration for a new respiratory treatment with which to treat blue baby syndrome. The application will be re-submitted with new information next year.

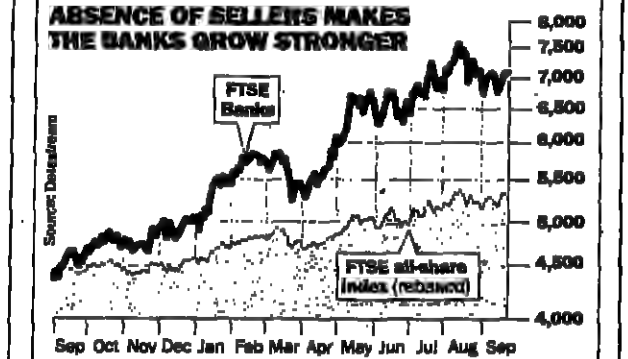
Chiroscience rose 12 1/2 p to 277p ahead of a meeting with brokers last night. British Biotech also rose 9 1/2 p to 168p after giving a presentation for



David Paget, of Whittard of Chelsea, saw shares fall 1 1/2 p

one of its new treatments in Hamburg yesterday. Shield Diagnostics was a volatile market touching limits of 700p and 627 1/2 p before recovering to close just 2 1/2 p off at 687 1/2 p. Speculative buying pushed ASW Holdings 8 1/2 p higher to 36 1/2 p, a rise of 30 per cent, amid heavy turnover of 2.7 million shares. One story suggests the French Group Unisior is ready to offer 50p a share, valuing the engineering group at £42 million.

There were further losses for National Power, down 9p at 543p, and PowerGen, 6 1/2 p off at 748 1/2 p. This follows barclays comments this week from Panmure Gordon, the broker, which claimed that other forecasts for National Power were too optimistic. PowerGen had been dragged lower by sentiment.



THE bank sector was up and running again, improving on its spectacular performance already this year. Credit Lyonnais, Laing, the broker, started the ball rolling by recommending Standard Chartered, up 41p at 858 1/2 p, as a "buy" to clients. James Johnson, at Laing, said the discount between Standard and HSBC, 2 1/2 p firmer at £19.61, had grown to 10 per cent — the widest it would be expected to reach. "We decided the shares should be bought. A difference of about 10 per cent more than accounts for the difference in the exposure to the Far East between the two companies," he said. But even he was surprised by the reaction of the Standard share price and some of the other banks. "When the financial markets pick up, the banks tend to run with things. Short term, we are selectively overweight, but some of the mortgage banks are fully valued," he added. Woolwich rose 10p to 327 1/2 p while Abbey National added 20 1/2 p to 906 1/2 p. Barclays 26p to £15.85, and Lloyds TSB 22p to 785p.

There was a mixed reaction to the news that President Clinton had thrown out the £23 billion tobacco settlement. BAT Industries responded with a rise of 1 1/2 p to 529p with Société Générale Strauss Turnbull, a broker, telling clients to "buy". Other brokers point out that BAT's current rating values the tobacco operation at virtually zero.

Imperial Group was down 8p at 367 1/2 p. It has been losing market share and next week loses its place as a constituent of the top 100 companies. Gallaher, which unveiled maiden interim numbers on Wednesday, slipped 6p to 26p.

Hanson, which also lost its place as a top 100 constituent, fell 6 1/2 p to 29p as did Mercury Asset Management, down 1 1/2 p at £12.30.

It was the first day of dealings on the big board for Whittard of Chelsea after moving up from AIM. The shares closed 1 1/2 p lighter at 230p but have come up from 200p in the past week on the back of results. Another company soon to make the move from AIM to a full listing is Alriche, 1 1/2 p better at 90p.

Datronics Group continued to reflect this week's share purchases by its newly appointed finance director with a rise of 1 1/2 p at 93p, stretching the gain of the past two days to 16 1/2 p.

Novo Group touched 52 1/2 p before ending the session 4p dearer at 49p after the news after the close of business on Wednesday, that it had received a bid approach.

GILT EDGED: There was a further flattening of the yield curve as worries about rising interest rates took their toll on shorter-dated issues.

Buying interest was focused on the ultra long end of the market at the expense of shorter dated issues. Treasury 8 per cent 2015 finished 8p better at £114.4, while Treasury 3 per cent 2000 was a tick easier at £103 1/2.

In the futures pit, the December series of the long gilt finished £11 1/2 better at £117 1/2 as the total number of contracts completed reached 124,000.

NEW YORK: The Dow Jones industrial average was up 101.26 points to 7,987.70 by midday as a further slide of friendly economic data boosted the bond and buoyed the cyclical stocks.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 7987.70 (+101.26)
S&P Composite 954.94 (+11.39)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 17930.09 (+246.02)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 14415.15 (+48.28)

Amsterdam:
BOE index 402.77 (+4.68)

Sydney:
AO 2696.30 (+17.00)

Frankfurt:
DAX 4000.48 (+10.03)

Singapore:
Strait Times 1896.09 (+14.15)

Brussels:
General 13506.23 (+27.81)

Paris:
CAC-40 2978.37 (+34.37)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 1177.00 (+9.80)

London:
FTSE 100 5046.2 (+33.1)
FTSE 250 4701.6 (+15.0)
FTSE 100-100 5046.2 (+33.1)
FTSE 100-250 4701.6 (+15.0)

FTSE All-Share 2370.17 (+13.5)
FTSE Non Financials 2367.24 (+10.13)
FTSE Real Interest 128.52 (+0.01)
FTSE Govt Secs 99.96 (+0.83)

Bargains 46776
SEAO Volume 821.2m
S&P 500 1457.17 (+0.013)
German Mark 1.6312 (+0.0025)
Exchange Index 100.0 (-1.1)
Bank of England official close Hpm

ESCU 1.4436
LSDR 1.1721
RPI 138.5 Aug 13.5% Jan 1997=100
RPIX 137.1 Aug 13.5% Jan 1997=100

RECENT ISSUES

Amalgamated CV Ltd 397 1/2
Bristol & West Plc 117 + 1/2
Camell Laird 144 + 2
BMT B 120 + 5
Fleming Asian 79 1/2 + 1/2
Firm Asian Writ 161 + 1/2
GR Holdings 52 1/2
Heron Holdings 235 + 9 1/2
Heron Public 92 1/2
IS Solutions 177 1/2
Kingfisher Leisure 107 1/2
Reasource Merit 104 + 3
SBS Group 110 1/2
Severn Trent B 38 1/2
Sovereign Warrants 37 1/2
Style Holdings 84 1/2
Thorn B 20 1/2
Vigil Technology 60 1/2 + 1/2

RIGHTS ISSUES

John Luty n/p (B) 1 1/2
Langdon's Rd n/p (B) 1 1/2
Mays CV n/p (B) 85 + 2 1/2
SEET n/p (B) 1 1/2

MAJOR CHANGES

RBS: 198p (+18p)
Widex 198p (+18p)
Corica 198p (+18p)
Geest 347p (+18p)
Scott 415p (+20p)
Stand Chart 688p (+41p)
Diagonal 435p (+20p)
Diamino 355p (+14p)
Laid 340p (+13p)
Wessex 340p (+13p)
Bowthorpe 378p (+12p)
Woolwich 227p (+10p)
Lloyds TSB 785p (+22p)

FALLS:
Servant 332p (-33p)
SIG 318p (-13p)
Gearhouse GP 381p (-14p)
Imparitel Tobacco 367p (-8p)
Charles & Sons 725p (-15p)
Woolwich 227p (-10p)
Broken Hill 713p (-12p)
Cadbury-Schwe 561p (-8p)
Capricorn 521p (-8p)
Select App 585p (-8p)
Bolt Shop 179p (-7p)

Closing Prices Page 29

TEMPUS

Keep investors afloat

P&O INVESTORS have legendary patience but they deserve some results rather than explanations. This time, the costs of the P&O holiday merger will be revenue account in the first half and will do more damage in the full year. However, we are told that the restructuring is on course: P&O is promising the sale of housebuilding, better profitability from containers and more property sales. But to what end?

What shareholders want from P&O is better cash flow: for years, money was ploughed into container ships and real estate and P&O has not raised its payout since 1990. Ideally, this restructuring would be an opportunity to shed even more capital-intensive businesses. The ferries, for example, tie up some £400 million but earned a mere 10 per cent return on capital last year. Given the

cost of new ships, a return of at least 20 per cent is needed to justify the investment. If the European Commission allows the joint venture with Stena to go ahead, P&O should package the merged business for disposal.

For so long P&O has been like a hoard of hungry children. After years of feeding they grew up into non-productive adolescents, expensive to run and with an uncertain future. P&O's scrip dividend demonstrated the acute craving for cash: a device which could increase the equity base by 6 per cent, leaving P&O with more to sink into ships.

Financing cruise ships with equity is an expensive strategy and one which P&O could avoid by selling down the group further. Having turned halfway towards its investors, P&O needs to go further and return some of the non-performing capital to shareholders.

Mirror Group

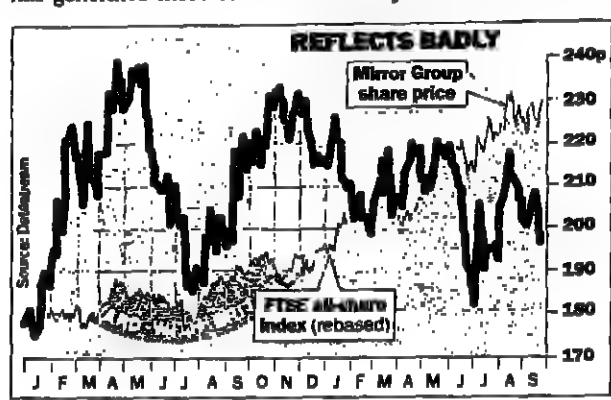
DAVID MONTGOMERY is running out of options and this is precisely why the shares of the Mirror Group, where he is chief executive, may be worth a punt. Mr Montgomery plunged into the smoking rubble of the newspaper company after the death of Robert Maxwell, refinanced it, secured its pension plans and kept its head above water during the nastiest circulation war in recent memory. The shares quadrupled in price. They began to sag early this year and have since underperformed the market.

The Mirror Group lacks an engine of growth. It is to a large extent a single-asset business in an industry with poor long-term growth prospects. While advertising revenues have been buoyant, the continuing price war

means there is little scope to raise cover prices.

Mr Montgomery is nobody's fool and has attempted to build a TV business, but his grand idea of launching a cable-TV programming venture has fallen flat for lack of partners. Meanwhile, Live TV, his low-budget network, has generated more column

inches than profits. Several years on and Mirror Group is still The Mirror plus some bits and pieces. With no new markets opening up, Mr Montgomery has the choice of selling out or using the group's ample cashflow to finance a share buyback, the latter is more likely. At the very least, a share buyback will buy him more time.



RMC

RMC GROUP is becoming a play on a German recovery. Fears of a weakening in the German construction market next year, combined with an expected slowdown in UK growth, cut 5 per cent from the share price.

The half-year figures from RMC's German business look misleadingly positive. Profits rose by almost a quarter to £35.5 million, even after the £7.1 million impact from the strong pound. However, this largely reflects the dire winter that damaged the 1996 results. RMC believes the underlying picture is a 4 to 6 per cent fall in German construction volumes, and this will come into focus during the more important second half. After another fall of perhaps 2 per cent next year, it hopes to see a recovery in 1999.

While the share price reaction is understandable, RMC is entitled to its seen-it-all-before insouciance. As the

management never tires of emphasising, Germany is a huge market and RMC is well placed to take advantage of its eventual revival — not least through the Rüdersdorf cement plant near Berlin. In the meantime, it is making good progress in the benign UK environment and in the rest of Europe, despite the intractable problems of the French economy.

At 98p the shares are unlikely to race away, but the company remains as solid as its concrete. This latest weakness makes the shares more attractive.

Kwik-Fit

IF INSURERS needed any more evidence that the public regards their brands with contempt, they should look at Kwik-Fit. From a standing start, and within two years, a chain of exhaust repair shops has become the sixth-largest purveyor of motor insurance, making a profit of £3 million in a half year. This is, in part,

the power of a brand which has instant recognition among motorists. However, the unlikely success indicates the extent to which insurance has become a commodity that sells on price, convenience and service.

Anyone thinking of quitting Kwik-Fit should question whether there is any reason why its insurance arm should not quickly move up the ladder in terms of market share. The only barrier is likely to be resistance from other insurers, but there is no shortage of underwriting capacity, this being an overcapitalised industry.

A frosty winter would wonder for Kwik-Fit which, because of its high fixed cost base, enjoys geared profits growth when revenues increase. However, the company is also showing signs of much better cashflow and will need to think of special dividends if current trends continue.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

BRITISH FUNDS

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ECONOMIC VIEW

ANATOLE KALETSKY



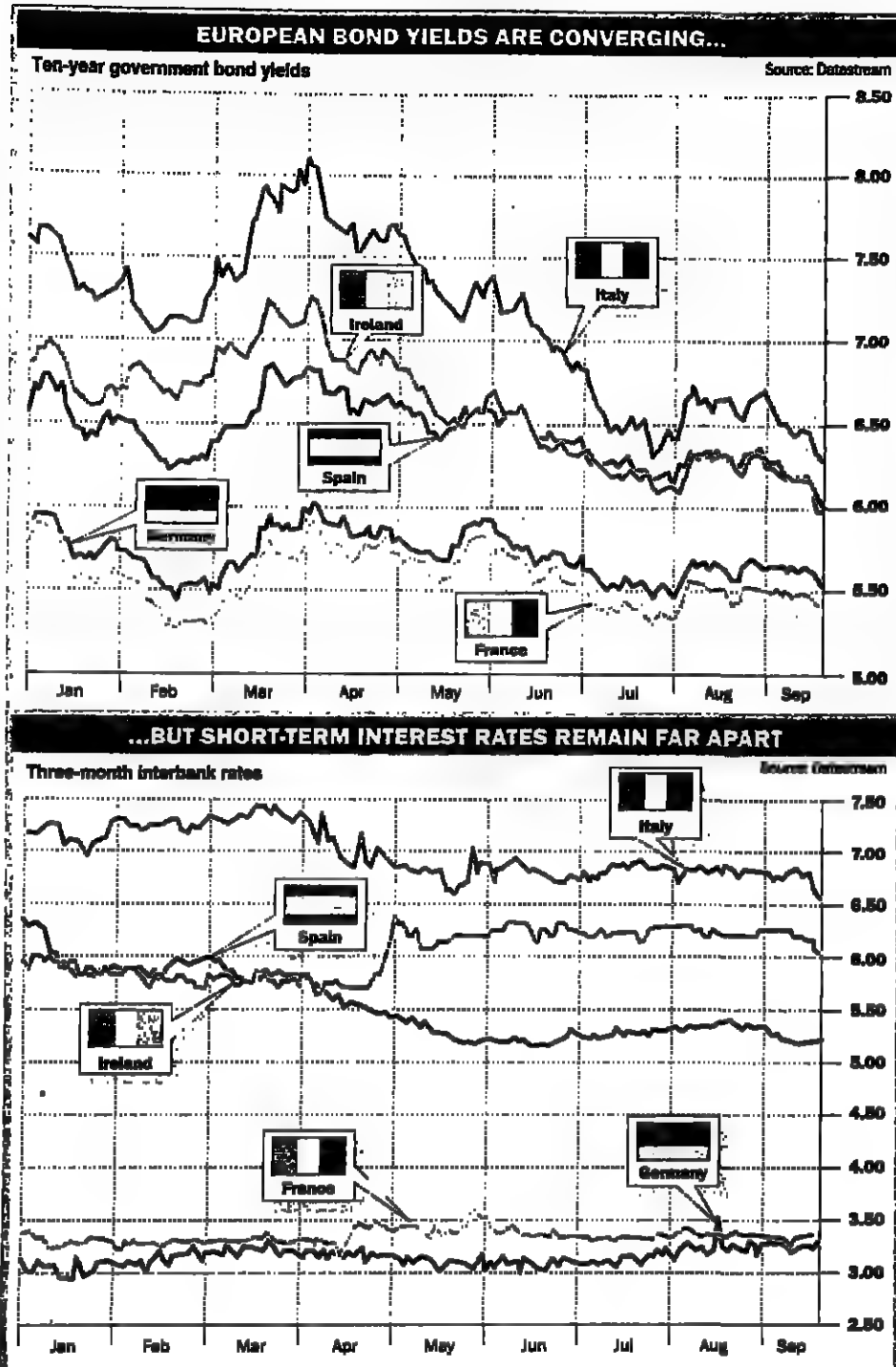
A strong pound is the best protection against EMU

Argument over divergent interest levels has important implications for Europe

The Bundesbank decision yesterday to keep its interest rates unchanged at 3 per cent may have pleased financial markets and must surely have delighted the French and German Governments. But for some European politicians, the Bundesbank's reluctance is becoming a source of embarrassment and economic distress. The clearest case is, of course, the British Government, which would be delighted if higher German interest rates were to bring the strong pound back down to earth. But now there are even stranger bedfellows for the monetary hard-liners on the Bundesbank council. Bizarrely, the Governments of Italy, Spain, Ireland, Portugal and Finland have all now joined the British Government and the Bank of England in hoping that German interest rates will soon go up.

To see why this is so and to understand the profound implications of this shift in alliances for the future of Europe — and for Britain's future relationship with the single currency — we can start with a rather technical question. If European monetary union is going to be irrevocably launched in May next year, as European governments announced over the weekend and as almost everyone in the worlds of finance and politics now firmly believes, why are German and Italian three-month interest rates still more than three percentage points apart? This seemingly narrow question contains within it many of the most interesting economic and political conundrums about the European economy, as I realised last weekend in talking to senior officials from Frankfurt, Paris and Brussels at a conference on EMU at Ditchley Park.

There are broadly two possible reasons for the continuing divergence between Italian and German rates. It could be that Italian and Spanish interest rates remain much higher than German ones because the markets do not yet quite believe that the Club Med countries will be allowed to join in the first wave of EMU. Alternatively, it may be that Italian (and Spanish) interest rates are being deliberately kept apart for good economic reasons. It may be that Italy and Spain need high interest rates to control inflation, while German (and French) rates must be kept down to mitigate unemployment and revive economic growth. If the first explanation is correct, then the single currency should be able to start smoothly. Mediterranean interest rates will fall



gradually as the starting date for EMU approaches and the markets become increasingly confident that Italy and Spain will take part. There will be no pressure on Germany and France to raise their interest rates before 1999 and EMU will get off to a good start with low interest rates, a competitive euro and robust economic growth.

The second explanation, on the other hand, suggests profound misgivings. It suggests that the single interest rate required under EMU will impose an inappropriate monetary policy either on Germany and France or on Italy and Spain. It also implies that Germany and France will have to raise their interest rates significantly in preparation for EMU. This monetary tightening could damage the recoveries that are only just starting in both these economies. Higher interest rates could also push the mark up against the dollar and yen, bequeathing an overvalued euro which would have to be defended with still further monetary tightening after 1999.

by the newly created European Central Bank. How, then, should we explain the divergence between Italian and German rates? The first explanation — that investors remain uncertain about EMU — may sound plausible, but it is not. Although short-term rates in Germany and Italy remain far apart, there has been a dramatic convergence in long-term bond yields, which are a much better measure of market expectations than officially determined short rates. The implication of this convergence in bond markets is clear: investors have reached the firm conclusion that monetary union will go ahead in January 1999 with all EU countries apart from Britain, Denmark, Sweden and Greece.

Why, then, do interest rates in Italy, Spain and Ireland remain so high and why can't they be reduced quickly to the German and French levels? If you ask central bankers in any of these countries they give the same answer — and one which the Bank of England would enthusiastically echo. Relatively high interest rates are needed to maintain low inflation.

Reducing interest rates to the "artificially low" levels now seen in the Franco-German core of Europe would unleash consumer booms and speculative financial bubbles in the peripheral European countries. Such monetary easing would put at risk all the anti-inflationary achievements of the past five years. One of the strange ironies of the EMU endgame is that Italy and Spain will be arguing for higher interest rates, while the proponents of an easier monetary policy will be hard currency countries such as France.

The French, who are absolutely determined not to increase their interest rates in preparation for EMU, oppose this argument from peripheral Europe with a vehemence that is only just becoming clear. They have broadly two ripostes, both of them painful to the peripheral countries that argue that German interest rates will have to converge upwards to meet those in Italy, Ireland and Spain.

The first is that peripheral countries that cannot live with 3 or 3.5 per cent interest rates may simply have to stay out of

EMU. Despite Lionel Jospin's insistent demands for Italian membership of EMU during the French election campaign, French officials are willing to question Italy's readiness to join the club. The whole point of EMU, they argue, was to create a club of non-inflationary countries with the highest possible monetary credibility and the lowest possible interest rates. This means that the euro must be seen as a natural successor of the mark and franc, with the same monetary policy. Euro interest rates cannot be set by "splitting the difference" between the mark and the lira.

The second riposte to suggestions for upward convergence of European interest rates is less brutal, but just as challenging for the peripheral countries that currently feel they need high interest rates. If Italy, Spain and the others fear the inflationary consequences of sharply lower rates, they should take other steps to deflate their economies — they should raise taxes or cut public spending even more aggressively than they already plan.

There is another, even more controversial way of suppressing inflation, which I have never heard officials mention in public, but which some market observers are starting to discuss. If countries like Spain and Ireland were really worried about inflation, they could always revalue their currencies upwards against the mark and the franc when the final conversion rates are set next May. If the peripheral countries joined EMU with higher than expected exchange rates against the euro, they might experience a once and for all deflation like the one that hit Britain in 1990 when John Major joined the ERM. This crushing of inflationary expectations would allow the peripheral countries to live with German and French-style interest rates. France and Germany, meanwhile, would enjoy an improvement in competitiveness against some of their main trading partners. Spain, Italy and Ireland will naturally resist such suggestions for currency revaluation — and in the end they are likely to succeed, if only because the French and Germans will be mindful of the financial instability unleashed when Britain joined the ERM at an overvalued exchange rate.

There could however be several important implications of these arguments, particularly for Britain. The first is that Germany is unlikely to raise its interest rate towards the Italian or Spanish levels, thereby relieving upward pressure on the pound. The second is that membership of EMU will not be a panacea for an overvalued pound. If Britain ever decides to join EMU it will not be allowed to devalue the pound as part of this process. And that, in turn, suggests another of the bizarre ironies of the EMU endgame: that Britain's best bulwark against any temptation to join EMU could be an overly strong pound.

Barbara Roche, the Small Firms Minister, was there. Labour shadow ministers used to turn up regularly before the election to speak at the Institute. But since they took power on May 1, the fiercely free-market IoD has not managed to entice a single one. Big business is copping up fast to the new Government: the CBI conference in November will feature more ministers than most Labour Party gatherings. The CBI's rival looked, until yesterday, way out in the cold, so there was a tangible sense of relief at the IoD's plush Pall Mall HQ at the Roche presence.

MARTIN WALLER



Barbara Roche is the first Labour Minister since the election to go to the IoD

Collection "artists" for sale. Plus, in the curiosity corner, paintings by Stalin's great grandson, "executed" — an unfortunate choice of words — whilst at Glasgow Art School. The pictures, that is, not the great grandson.

ON A less artistic note, Barclays, not content with having made its monthly Barclays statements almost illegible on the advice of the design merchants, now plans to do the same with ordinary bank accounts. The bank is trying out some new personal financial summaries alongside normal bank statements. I search for the real reason for this "innovation". Ah ha. If you have more than £100 in your account over the period, you will be offered financial advice, unsought, on what to do with it. Such as stuffing it in one of the Barclays savings accounts. And if you've almost paid off your loan, they offer you another one. Freephone number provided.

IoD den

NOT since Shirley, now Baroness, Williams in 1975 has a Labour minister dared address company bosses at the Institute of Directors. And some might say she wasn't terribly Labour. But yesterday,



collection of modern British art built up by Barclays Bank, a project close to the heart of its chairman, Andrew Buxton. Most has been bought since 1991, on the basis of what he personally liked and what he thought Barclays staff would like. So the good news is that this is modern art as in people with paintbrushes applying paint onto canvas. Expect names such as Lowry and Sickert at the bank's loan exhibition at the Royal College of Art at Kensington Gore from next Wednesday. No pickled sharks, no pornographic photographs and nothing to do with Charles Saatchi.

The bad news is that there might be a bit of that elsewhere at the RCA fair, which has work from several Saatchi

Bank of art

NEXT week also offers the first chance to see some of the

Blind eye

ANOTHER former Cabinet member has found a new salary, sorry, job in the real world. Anthony Nelson is joining Salomon Brothers as managing director of European investment banking. Nelson, 49, was a minister at the DTI and before that Economic Secretary to the Treasury. By going to the American securities house he has administered a bit of a back-hander to his former employer, NM Rothschild, which he left in 1974 to go into politics. I am told he did not



"Phew! for one awful second I thought you were selling pensions!"

even talk to Rothschild when he decided to head back to the City. His decision may have been influenced by the seven-figure salaries on offer at Salomon, not matched at a smaller British bank. I put the point to the Americans. There ensues a lot of corporate guff about global-breadth business, powerful market positions in Asia and so on. But no one is exactly denying it.

THIS is the sort of thing that gave Marie Antoinette a bad name. Luxury Briefing, a publication devoted to various items you and I don't need and can't afford, is presenting an award for the best British luxury company next week at Asprey, where else, at a party full of gossip column nonentities — Lulu Guinness, Mogens Tholstrup, the usual grim crew. The prize is "an unusual trophy in the form of a solid silver and silver gilt shopping bag". How very Eighties, darling. Conspicuous consumption is so passé.

Marriage made in accountants' minds still shy of consent

Robert Bruce on what could prove to be the last great merger within the profession

Cricket fans, lifting their eyes from the action at Lord's this summer, might have noticed that the accountants Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand have adjoining hospitality boxes in the Mound Stand. It would be nice to think that the talks which led to yesterday's announcement of the coming together of the two accounting giants, in what has the potential to be the world's largest accounting firm, started with a chat over a balcony rail.

But the reality of the accountancy world is very different to the gentlemanly image partnership structures like to portray. The driving force for the merger was pressures deep within the US accounting scene, the most important of which is regulation.

The last time a mega merger was achieved in the accounting world — when Deloitte, Haskins & Sells came together with Touche Ross in 1989 — the main issue was that of the tough American anti-trust laws. That time the merger got through by the skin of its teeth. This time it is going to be difficult.

In the words of one member of the team, which has been working day and night on the legal aspects of the proposed Coopers & Waterhouse merger, "this could be the last time a merger like this is allowed". The American regulatory structure tolerated the last moves, which whittled down what had been a "big eight" of top accountancy firms to a "big six".

At Coopers & Waterhouse they have calculated that the American authorities might tolerate one more merger, but would then stick with a "big five" as the smallest number of dominant firms that they would allow.

This would make the proposed merger a masterstroke. Price Waterhouse and Coopers & Lybrand could merge and become the largest firm globally, in the US and in the UK. And the move would put a stop to any further mergers among their competitors, who would all be snuck, like flies in amber, unable to grow through merger ever again.

In the UK the regulatory issues are equally strong. Coopers, whose chairman is Peter Smith, is currently the second-biggest firm. Price Waterhouse is the fifth-biggest firm. But they also have a strong line in blue chip audit clients. The result of the merger in the UK would be that the firm would become

the biggest in the land, but it would also have half the audits of the companies in the FTSE 100.

Under the Conservative government the policy was that accountancy firms were one of the country's great success stories and growth, even when it neared the edge of the competition guidelines, was allowed. Under the gaze of Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, the story may be very different. Officials are holding their cards close to their chests at the moment and are not sure whether the merger would come under the aegis of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) or, because of its size, be referred straight to Brussels.

The other American pressure driving this merger is market share. In America, Coopers and Price Waterhouse are the fifth and sixth-biggest firms. The pressure is always going to be greatest on the firms in the bottom slots to get together and so leapfrog their way to the top. And it is given added impetus when the firm you are knocking off the top is Arthur Andersen, long seen as the unchallengeable giant but now wrestling with a consultancy arm and an audit and business assurance

arm at seemingly endless loggerheads.

Meanwhile, the real work to pull off the merger now has to begin. Regulatory pressures from government agencies can seem to be the least of your problems when you are trying to persuade more than \$500 around the world to vote for the proposals. The majority required, two thirds of all partners at Price Waterhouse in the UK, for example, is tough to achieve. In particular, there must be worries about Price Waterhouse in the UK, where partners have a history of voting down merger proposals. In 1984 they humiliated their own leadership by voting against a proposal to merge with Deloitte. In 1989 they failed to consummate a merger with Arthur Andersen.

This time around there are already rumours of partners reacting with fury when the story that broke the news in *The Times* was confirmed.

The final worry is how far the two businesses will suffer through management upheaval should the merger go through. Nick Land, senior partner of Ernst & Young, has argued that a lack of resources is the real problem facing the big accounting firms — there are simply not enough experienced partners, managers and specialists to go round.

Mergers always create uncertainty and when the market is buoyant disaffected staff tend to head elsewhere. "Judging by the way that Coopers handled their last merger, we will fill our resource bucket," said Mr Land.



Ian Brindle, left, of Waterhouse, and Peter Smith yesterday

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A show of courage on the podium

This is becoming a bad month for conductors. Sir Georg Solti died a fortnight ago. Now comes word that Klaus Tennstedt is gravely ill. Tennstedt didn't shake the musical firmament as Solti did. His time at the top was tragically short. His recordings relatively few. But for a glorious spell in the 1980s he gave London the most life-affirming concerts I ever expect to hear.

Both his career and his health were battered by innumerable blows of malign fate. Yet time again he triumphed over adversity, and all his performances proclaimed the scars of his struggle. That was the essence of his terrible, compelling glory. I doubt whether I shall ever encounter another conductor so capable of embodying both the frailty of man and the greatness of mankind. To journey with Tennstedt through Mahler or Beethoven — the turbulent souls with whom he most closely identified — was to penetrate the heart of darkness, and to emerge as if reborn.

He took amazing risks that often

didn't work. He could be infuriatingly negligent about such mundane matters as keeping the orchestra together. And his interpretations were prone to colossal exaggerations of speed and dynamics. Lenny Bernstein was a figure of monastic restraint by comparison. "Neurosis in Disneyland," I whined on these pages in 1986, having staggered away from a Tennstedt performance that distressed my delicate sensibilities. Today I wish that I could eat those words. What would I give, what would any music lover give, to have Tennstedt back in the Festival Hall? God knows, there has been nothing like him since.

He told me that the secret of conducting was to reveal "the big line, the line that draws together all the thousands of tiny details". Was he speaking in purely musical terms? I think not. When Elgar was asked what his First Sympho-

ny was about, he replied "a man's attitude to life". Tennstedt's "big line" was an attitude to life as well.

It was some life. He could have been a top-class violinist, but a growth between the knuckles of his fingering hand put an end to that, even before he had finished his studies in postwar Leipzig. One dream shattered, he picked himself up, switched to conducting — and promptly sank into 20 years of obscurity in the grey ranks of East Germany's state music system.

Not until he and his wife Inge fled to the West in 1971 did he achieve international fame: a stupendous debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1974 was the turning-point. By then he was nearly 50. If a Tennstedt performance sounded like a man desperately trying to compress a lifetime into a few minutes, that is exactly what it was.

Then followed a decade, no



RICHARD MORRISON

more, of triumph. Fortunately for us, Tennstedt developed a rapport with the London Philharmonic, and became its principal conductor in 1980. He was endearingly bigoted. He dismissed all period-instrument performers as "gang-

sters". As for 20th-century music, he believed that "Mahler was the last genius". Mahler, of course, died in 1911.

Consequently, Tennstedt's repertoire never grew much. Mahler, Bruckner, Strauss, Brahms and Wagner: they were his meat and drink. But what feasts he made of them. Those who longed to return to the days when conductors flaunted their pride and prejudice flocked to Tennstedt's concerts. Those who didn't (me included) came to scoff and stayed to cheer.

But then disaster struck. Tennstedt smoked. No, that's a small understatement. Ten cigarettes an hour was his going rate. In 1985 throat cancer was diagnosed. Six operations followed. Somehow he found the courage to make extraordinary comebacks. All the fear and despair he felt in those dark days

would be poured into Mahler. No wonder his tempos went wild. To say that he conducted each of those concerts as if believing it would be his last is the literal truth.

Ten years ago, on a bright August day, the last act of Tennstedt's tragedy began. It happened in Watford Town Hall, of all incongruous places. He was rehearsing the London Philharmonic for a Prom, when he collapsed.

There had been too many cancellations already that year. Tennstedt loved the LPO as he loved no other orchestra, and (in that professional musicians have favourable feelings for any conductor) the LPO loved him. But the music business is a business. The show must go on, and an orchestral show needs a conductor fit enough to hold a stick. Tennstedt, acutely aware of all this, resigned within the hour.

It wasn't quite the end of his

career. I remember a heaven-storming performance of Mahler's *Resurrection Symphony* in 1989, if only because I was unable to sleep for two days afterwards. But it was a doleful portent of a fading life.

What chiefly endeared Tennstedt to audiences and players alike, I believe, was his humility. He was never arrogant, as conductors customarily are. He never lorded it over orchestras. Significantly, he was the first German ever to be invited to conduct the Israel Philharmonic, and in 1988 that orchestra planted 36 trees in his honour — a Hebrew custom wishing the donor a long life.

Perhaps the trees have had some effect. But now it seems that, as in Mahler's Sixth Symphony, the hammerblows of fate have finally exhausted even this resilient spirit. I once asked Tennstedt about his hobby: hot-air ballooning, preferably 2,000ft above the Rockies. What was the big attraction of this dangerous pursuit? "Ah," he replied, "it is the only place to search for complete peace." I hope he finds that peace.

THEATRE: A tame new musical premiered at the Donmar; a cult novel artily staged at the Lyric, Hammersmith

Overdose of sugar impairs seduction

He is a matinee idol, she is the actress performing opposite him in a romantic play, and all is not well with their marriage. He thinks she is weary of him and may be about to take a lover. She seems to justify his fears when she declares that "we play the love scenes by numbers and have cold suppers afterwards".

So he devises a stratagem to check her fidelity. He fills her dressing room with bunches of red roses, and, camouflaged as the Guards officer who supposedly sent them, sets about seducing her.

Such is the plot which the Hungarian dramatist, Ferenc Molnár, concocted in 1910 and which two young North Americans have now transformed into a small-scale musical. It makes for a most pleasant, diverting evening, but not for anything much more. I cannot accuse the creative chiefs at the Donmar of putting too much sugar into Molnár's bitter-sweet mix, but they could certainly have been more lavish with the angustura and aloes.

Perhaps Molnár exaggerated when he described the play as "perfectly agonising", but there is no doubting the tangled poignancy of the situa-



Enter the Guardsman

tion. Mistrust and jealousy torment the disguised Actor, as he is bluntly called, to the point where he wants to challenge himself to a duel.

And the denouement is, or should be, decidedly ambiguous. Maybe the Actress has seen through his plumed and braided persona from the start and has gone along with the pretence; maybe not. Maybe she is like the wife in Pinter's *Lower*, and hankers for a husband with a bit of danger and sex-appeal in him.

But nobody at the Donmar quite rises to the emotional occasion. Janie Dee produces moments of yearning, even of mild erotic hunger, but it is hard to see her either as a woman with seven previous lovers' names scratched on her bedpost or as a performer whose Camille has been compared with Bernhardt's. She is too much the gamine, the demure English rose, too little the louche sophisticate or the dominating actress. As for Alexander Hanson's Actor, he is effective enough when it comes to blubbing or boasting

(try as he may, he cannot stop his fake Guardsman praising his Hamlet) but he could do more to acknowledge the tortuous weirdness of his predicament.

But what else should one expect of a musical, or at least a musical not by Stephen Sondheim? Well, Jeremy Sams, who directs, might have done more to evoke mid-European café society. A tiny phalanx of theatre people — wistful dresser, comically gay wig-maker, etc. — beavering and gossiping amid grey crates and other backstage debris is hardly atmospheric enough. Again, the composer and lyricist, Craig Bolmter and Marion Adler, might have opted for a jaded period feel instead of the indiscriminately sprightly one they actually give us.

That sort of knowing unease is provided by Nicky Henson, playing a Molnár surrogate who encourages and observes his married friends' extramarital liaisons; but too seldom, too fitfully. This is an evening for those in search of gentle, civilised fun. Those with darker tastes should wait for some enterprising soul to revive the original play.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Alexander Hanson and Janie Dee smell the greasepaint in *Enter the Guardsman*

Surreal sadism is not for beginners

Why bother with the stuffed, the pickled and the painted at the Royal Academy when you can have a live Sensation in the comfort of your own stall seat, courtesy of Iain Banks's gamey cult novel, *The Wasp Factory*? Here a young boy, Frank, played by three actors in combat fatigues (Daniel Ilisley, Janine Wood and Harry Capehorn), runs wild on a Scottish island, catapulting rabbits, dismembering birds.

His is a world of sadistic fantasies. Dad interferes with Frank's food and keeps a cellar full of explosive cordite. Older brother Eric has escaped from a lunatic asylum and is bearing down on the island, torturing and torching dogs in his wake. Mum did a runner years ago.

In flashbacks we learn why the relatives aren't much nicer. By the time Frank is in his mid-teens he has murdered three of them. "It was just a stage I was going through," his older self comments drily. Nevertheless he is a model of sanity beside the schizophrenia that afflicts his family.

The director Malcolm Sutherland has been unhealthily hung up on this brutal piece since he premiered it at the Glasgow Citz five years ago. The current incarnation is a stiller, more self-consciously theatrical piece. But Sutherland's stark production still strikes me as illustrated entirely for people who have read the novel. If you haven't a sense of the book, this will leave you floundering. It is like an arthouse Frankenstein movie directed by the monster.

Why do Frank's several adolescent selves make such a

The Wasp Factory
Lyric, Hammersmith

pretentious Gothic meal of his life? Cutting open and then dynamiting a large fake fluffy rabbit does little to capture the book's grainy reality or Frank's peculiar tragedy. The more the actors play up the symbolism, the more they look like cogs in a machine.

Panic takes the place of character development as Eric's increasingly frenzied phone calls signal his imminent arrival. Panic, too, in the stalls as we desperately try to find someone on whom one can pin an ounce of empathy.

The play reaches its graphic conclusion with a series of set pieces, extracted from the novel and blown up like black and white war photographs. It doesn't take an accountant to work out that it's not for their plot value. On the plus side, they are beautifully framed by Sutherland. Perhaps they should start issuing catalogues rather than programmes at the box office.

The only figure to keep it together is David Gant's long-haired Glaswegian father. Sounding uncannily like a cracked version of Billy Connolly, Gant's father leans against a pillar of cigarette smoke, dispensing the family horror stories with a comedian's sense of timing and a madman's cackle. Who said modern art doesn't have a sense of humour?

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

Writers go for gold in Athens

Benedict Nightingale reports on a 'cultural Olympiad' that offered vast prizes to unknown dramatists

A full orchestra played, two enormous choruses sang. The Athens Concert Hall was packed with bigwigs, starting with the Greek Prime Minister and the Greek President, who proceeded to hand a prize of \$250,000 to one playwright, \$200,000 to a second, and a total of \$250,000 to five others.

No, this is not one of those daydreams that failed writers have while they starve in attics. It really happened earlier this week. While the city was still digesting the news that it will stage the Olympics proper in 2004, Athens was presenting a "cultural Olympiad", so-called, in which the competitors had been asked to pen plays focusing on the "problems facing Man on the threshold of the 21st century".

Since the sponsor was the Onassis Foundation, it was clear the winners would not end up with crystal goblets with pictures of Epidauros etched on them. They would certainly fare better than Sophocles and Euripides, for whom mere honour was enough 2,400 years ago. But one had expected the big bucks to go to Edward Shevardnadze, Steven Runciman and the other eminent figures the foundation was honouring at the same ceremony.

Yet no sooner had a representative of the International Maritime Organisation delivered a thank-you speech than up stepped Manjula Padmanabhan, followed by Anton Juan, Nagle Jackson and four others of whom I, for one, had not heard. Never can dramatists have received prizes remotely as lavish. Never has so much gone to dramatists so little-known.

A bloated fiasco, then, or a case of misdirected largesse? No; but I must admit some such fear passed through my mind before I read the winning play. None of the drama-

tists and dramatists I asked in England — not even David Edgar, whose playwrighting course at Birmingham University fosters loads of new work — had heard of the cultural Olympiad. Moreover, there was (and remains) no guarantee that any of the successful plays would actually be performed. The Onassis people seemed in danger of paying \$700,000 for a lot of portentous millennial scribbles posing as drama.

Doubtless there were some such scribbles among the 1,460 plays from 76 nations that landed on the judges' tables. The three winners all wrote about a world perilously divided between haves and have-nots; but I cannot say I was impressed by Jackson's

Elevation of Thieves. The author, an American, heavily-handedly spoofs a fuddy-duddy European city whose leaders are less than delighted at the idea of a poor Muslim immigrant participating in their annual crucifixion ritual. The Hungerford-type massacre that ends the proceedings seemed inadequately motivated and reinforced my feeling that this was merely a piece of liberal breast-beating.

That is not an accusation, though, that can be directed at the other winners. *Tuko!* *Tuko!*, by the Filipino Anton, brings legends, ghosts and puppets into the dramatic equation, and will be tough to stage. But it merits a showing, not least because of the protagonist's burning rage at Japan's

exploitation of his country's women, both now and during the war. But Padmanabhan's *Harvest* is still harder-hitting, involving as it does a trade all too likely to increase as the West gets more spoilt and the Third World more desperate.

Padmanabhan, an Indian illustrator and writer little performed in her own country, postulates a Bombay where unemployment is almost universal and street gangs feed on dead derelicts. The only way for a respectable man to ensure that life in a cramped tenement becomes bearable is to make his organs available on demand to a svelte American who intermittently appears on a television module, purring out her appreciation in California-speak but getting hysterical when her putative donor so much as sneezes. Colds have been eradicated in her own Eden.

The play is set in 2010 and made me realise how seldom drama ventures into sci-fi. But most of the technology it evokes already seems feasible and the social trends it describes are perfectly probable. You certainly cannot dismiss Padmanabhan as paranoid, given the subtlety and dark humour she brings to what is, at root, essentially a warning tale about a modern travesty of Buddhist or Hindu reincarnation.

In spite of everything the Onassis Foundation has uncovered a dramatist worth international production. So pleased are its officers with their achievements that they hope soon to expand their cultural Olympiad into music, sculpture and the other arts — and to hold another contest for dramatists in 2001. With another half-million or so bucks on offer, I wouldn't be surprised if Molère and Sheridan, Marlowe and O'Neill, rose from their graves to compete.

Manjula Padmanabhan: won \$250,000 for *Harvest*, a play projecting a nightmare vision of India in 2010

If only Joe Orton could have written a play about his own violent death, what a fabulous, funny tale he would have woven. Orton tended to be chronological, but perhaps on this occasion he would have started with the driver arriving at his home to take him to a film studio, only to find the playwright murdered and his lover also dead.

That was 30 years ago last month, an anniversary that is sufficient excuse for Radio 3 to be putting out new productions of two of his works: *Loot* last Sunday and *Up Against It* this coming Sunday (7.30pm). Neither has been done on the radio before. *Loot* is of course a stage play, whereas *Up Against It* was written as a film script for the Beatles.

Orton was such a figure of the 1960s and its ultra-Modernism that one almost forgets that he wrote farces, though they might now be called black comedies. *Loot* was certainly black and just as certainly comedic, indeed one was thankful for this reminder of how funny Orton could be.

Ortons by the pair

RADIO

Loot concerns the death of a woman and the thieving activities of her son and how the proceeds of a robbery by the latter come to be in the coffin of the former. Is that all? Heavens no. There is also a crooked copper posing as a man from the water board, a sub-Kafka figure who is frightening and foolish by turns.

Nor is that all, either. The dead woman's nurse, a woman with an eye on the widower's cash, turns out to be an habitual murderer whose impressive previous record includes six (or is it seven?) husbands, all mysteriously ren-

dered in the past tense (as an Orton character might have put it).

All of which, clever plot-making though it is, amounts only to a series of bows from which Orton fires arrows at favoured subjects: women, religion, authority, manners, hypocrisy, duplicity. He uses all the available voices to do so, with the result that by the end of *Loot* you hardly know whom to like least.

But did this work on the radio? After all, there is much visual fun in the shunting around of the body, especially the attempts late in the play to pass it off as a tailor's dummy. Hard to convey through the ether, but director Lindsay Posner pulled it off in splendid style, and the acting was first rate. *Loot* and *Up Against It* are the sort of 90-minute dramas that will soon be too long, apparently, for Radio 4, a network now proposing to sell drama as if it was curtain material. Still, Radio 3 will have no complaints.

PETER BARNARD

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Season of Sundays worth the wait

Why did Harriet Wheeler and David Gavurin take five years to come up with their new album? 'Dunno,' they chorus

The Sundays take five years to record an album, and they have absolutely no excuse as to why this should be. One of those Couples in Rock — like Abba, the Mamas and the Papas or various conjunctions of Fleetwood Mac — David Gavurin and Harriet Wheeler launch into their fifth pint of the evening and run through all the possibilities.

"Decorating? Nah, it can't be that. Our house is a mess," Wheeler muses. "We painted the bathroom red in 1994, but that only took an afternoon."

"We built our studio," Gavurin offers. "That took a while. What was our chosen method of soundproofing? Oh, it's not egg boxes. I dunno who started the myth that egg boxes soundproof places. Maybe it's because acoustic tiles look like egg boxes, and some gullible literalist made a fragile connection. No, we use mattresses for our soundproofing, which makes it tricky when guests come to stay. Then we can't record."

"That's why it took so long," Wheeler leaps on the excuse. "We also had a baby," she adds. "That took nine months or so."

So where is said rock'n'roll child tonight? "Oh, home alone," Gavurin says, straight-faced. "They've got to learn sometime. Apparently, 50 per cent of 999 calls are made by children, so the chances are she'll know what to do if things go wrong. She knows where the grill pan is. She knows where the fish fingers are."

"She was so sweet when she was tiny!" Wheeler goes into motherly mode. "You could hold her in the palm of your hand, but she usually fell off. Now she's obsessed with Liverpool FC. We have to play this game where she's Robbie Fowler. Sometimes she's Steve McManaman, but it's usually Robbie."

The emergency services are going to be very perplexed when Robbie Fowler rings up, disguising his voice as a two-year-old child, and tells them the house is on fire," Gavurin sighs. "Maybe we should have shelled out extra for a babysitter tonight."

There are five things that people know about the Sundays. Two of

these facts have already been mentioned: their coupleness and their album procrastination. The third has become clear — they can carry a jolly jape concerning their responsibility as parents. The fourth is that Wheeler's hair has remained exactly the same since 1988 — when they first burst ("Apologetically shuffled," Gavurin corrects) on to the scene with *Can't Be Sure*, which topped John Peel's Festive 50 Christmas chart, and sounded the "Hallelujah" for their debut album, *Reading, Writing and Arithmetic*. It's a cottage-loaf kind of tonsorial affair, a bouffant, large granary swell topped by a smaller follicular croissant. Joe, a member of the under-rated bliss merchants Butterfly Child, once lived opposite their house, and ran a betting version of I Spy, wherein guests could take up binoculars and attempt to spot Wheeler with her hair down. The game finished six months later, with Wheeler's hair still firmly stapled atop her head.

"That was another reason why the album took so long," Gavurin sighs. "Harriet just couldn't decide whether to go up or down with the hair. We were going for a radical change, but she bottled it at the last minute."

This leads us on to the fifth and final Sundays fact: that they always sound the same. Half of this could be down to Wheeler's voice: a delirious elastic carolling sound, not unlike a tipsy lark spiralling nestward after a very good evening. The other half of this could be down to Gavurin's guitar-playing: sunrise acoustics setting up ditty mantras before expanding into burnished chrome arcs for the chorus.

These two things together, however, sound impossibly out of time and idyllic, like Laurie Lee's village folk trying to guess what music might sound like in a rural Utopian 2002.

The only thing that changes are the seasons the Sundays evoke: the debut *Reading, Writing and Arithmetic*, with its fidgety time signatures and honeyed insouciant joy, was a pollen-drunk summer; *Cider With Rosie* in the hay. The follow-up, 1992's *Blind*, was autumn-born: Monet-purple skies



Harriet Wheeler, the woman with the fresh-baked hair, and David Gavurin — the Sundays to their friends — reflect on *Static and Silence*

filled with spinning gold and red leaves. The guitars often became painfully bright like the frost-glare on frozen roads. There is the feeling that, although things are becoming thrillingly epic and bracing, everything will be swept away. And so it is only logical that

Static and Silence, the Sundays' new album, is winter: stripped and hushed, yet still full of heart-like warmth and beauty. The acoustics have changed, as they do in winter: sometimes small and delicate, like gardens full of snow; at others, endless and glittering, like frozen

lakes. It often echoes the intimacy of a heart slowly breaking. "Ah well, my father got ill and died within a year," Wheeler explains. "It was the oddest thing." For the first time in the three hours we have spent together, the Sundays seem to be struggling for

words. "It was like: 'Oh! You're not there any more!'" Wheeler still looks startled recalling it. "You know? I couldn't find him anywhere. That's probably why this album is winter-sad and simple." *Static and Silence* is released on Monday by Parlophone

Smooth fusion at the factory

FORT DUNLOP, a derelict factory on the outskirts of Birmingham best viewed from the M6, is perhaps an unusual source of musical inspiration, especially given songwriters' customary unwillingness to celebrate English place names in their art. But as Birmingham-born saxophonist Theo Travis demonstrated, in the right hands it is capable of playing the muse whatever its appearance.

Taking the sounds of a working factory as his starting point, he has constructed a vigorous, hard-swinging jazz vehicle from a relatively simple, driving theme.

The result — initially commissioned as part of the *Broad Street Changes* suite by West Midlands Arts — provided him with the perfect opener for his week-long residency at Ronnie Scott's, where he is playing opposite singer Irene Reid.

Sparked initially by drum-

LIVE JAZZ

Theo Travis

Ronnie Scott's

mer Marc Parnell's brisk snare-drum tattoo, the tune began as a strident tenor anthem, but swiftly evolved into a beguiling, intensely melodic lode, providing the platform for some muscular but rhapsodic improvising from Travis over Dave Gordon's sparkling piano and Rob Statham's tight, singing electric bass.

The fact that Travis employs this latter instrument rather than the upright acoustic version has led to his being described as a "fusion saxophonist".

His slow-building eloquence on the quartet's second selection, Chick Corea's *Sea Journey*, which climaxed in an eloquent display of windily verbose passion, did indeed betray the influence of fusion tenor maestro Michael Brecker.

Travis's roots, however, are just as firmly set in acoustic, subtly swinging jazz, and he proved it first with a touchingly reverent soprano/piano duo version of the standard *My Foolish Heart*, then with an almost Stan Getz-smooth version of his own gently wafting *Lullworth Night*, the opening track of his latest album, *Secret Island*.

The same album provided the quartet's blustering set closer, *The Crow Road*, inspired by the Iain Banks novel.

But the highlight of their performance was provided by the bustling, smartly percussive *Friday Night at the Cadillac Club*, which showcased Parnell's briskly assertive but supple drumming, a vital ingredient of the band's robust yet tasteful overall sound.

For the past two years running, Theo Travis has been nominated in the British Jazz Awards' Rising Star category; to judge by this performance, his ascension is all but complete.

CHRIS PARKER

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Sorry, dancing's off, love

Lisa Verrico

joins the

fruitless hunt

for a good bop

on the 1997

Camden Crawl

as studiously cool as the band's Liam Gallagher-like singer. When in Camden, the Lo-Fi usually play the Monarch pub, where their deafening punk-enthusiast big beats go down a storm. Perhaps they should have exchanged Crawl venues with American singer Tanya Donelly, whose show to promote her recently released debut solo album,

Lovesongs for Underdogs, took place in the Monarch's tiny upstairs room.

Donelly sold more than two million albums with her previous band, Belly. Inevitably, scores of fans of that band eager to hear the singer's fuzzy, upbeat guitar pop stood in a queue outside for most of the set.

Camden Crawl wound up at the Electric Ballroom, where Echo and the Bunnymen turned out to be the evening's secret special guest. Their competent set consisted mainly of 1980s hits such as *The Cutter* and *The Killing Moon*. As the bulk of the evening's acts prepared to travel to Manchester and Glasgow for secondary stages of the event, the words "Don't walk before you can crawl" were on everyone's lips.

There can be no better indication of dance music's move from the underground into the alternative territory once occupied by Britpop bands than the line-up at the Camden Crawl on Wednesday. The annual event, which took place in six separate venues and stretched from 6pm until after midnight, started three years ago as a showcase for new talent with a bill dominated by indie guitar acts. This year, however, more than half of the gigs were by electronic outfits. At least, that was the plan.

If organisers were aware of the renowned unreliability of dance bands, they made no contingency plans. Before the Crawl even began, big beat favourites Dub Pistols pulled out of their end-of-evening slot at the Underworld club. Up Camden's High Street, the Dingwalls venue, fared even worse. Of the four acts scheduled to appear, only the pair with guitar players (Warm Jets and Snow Patrol) bothered to turn up. Headliners Headrillaz at least had the courtesy to cancel in advance. The techno-driven Hardknox simply didn't show.

In an ill-advised attempt to step up the scale of the Camden Crawl, this year the 2,000-capacity Forum was added to the agenda of venues. With ticket sales significantly down on 1996's event (only 2,500 or so people were thought to have bought the £15 wristbands required to get into all six venues throughout the evening), the cavernous Forum looked ominously empty, even for the Swedish headline band The Wannadies.

It did not help that the Forum is more than a mile away from the centre of Camden. In the past, the bustle of people rushing between shows added intimacy and a sense of excitement. This time, waiting for the free bus that shuttled at no fixed time from venue to venue was more of a chore.

Nevertheless, the Camden Crawl did have its highlights. Le-Fidelity Allstars — a cross between the Chemical Brothers and Shaun Ryder's old band Happy Mondays — ignored a pitiful turnout for their Forum show to fire rhythmic missiles, like their latest single, *Disco Machine Gun*, over the heads of indie boys trying desperately to look

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Depression moving in from Iceland

POP ALBUMS: Winter has Björk's heart in its grip, and harder men than David Sinclair would be saddened

BJÖRK

Homogenic
(One Little Indian TPLP71)
£13.99

SHE comes from the land of the ice and snow, a place where there is space and great beauty but also emptiness and, at times, a chilling sense of desolation. And, while you can take Björk out of Iceland, it seems you cannot take Iceland out of Björk's music.

Her new album, *Homogenic*, is a fusion of futuristic electronic rhythm tracks and neo-chamber string arrangements, provided by the Icelandic String Octet. There are moments of high drama. "Excuse me, but I just have to explode," she announces in *Pluto*, her ultra-compressed voice favoring over layers of radiostatic sound effects and a frantic techno beat.

But whereas in the past Björk's tendency towards introspection, both musically and in her lyrics, was leavened by the sheer exuberance of her performance, here she seems to have suppressed her pop instincts, allowing a sense of coldness and isolation to exert an unusually vice-like grip on the heart of songs such as the ethereal *Unravel* and the stark *All Neon Like*.

"I thought I could organise freedom/How Scandinavian of me," she sings in *Hunter*, the strings sawing away dolorously all around while a

fractured marching-drum beat rattles away in double-time at the back.

As frosty as Stina Nordenstam and as earnest as Elvis Costello during his Brodsky Quartet phase, *Homogenic* is an album that will ultimately prove easier to admire than to love.

POOKA

Spinning
(Trade/Island 524 426 £15.49)

THE duo of Sharon Lewis and Natasha Jones, otherwise known as Pooka, announced its presence in 1993 with a debut album ostensibly of coffee-house folk, but given a demonic twist in the harmonies and lyrics. For *Spinning*, their belated follow-up, the pair have reinvented themselves as a post-Alanis Morissette acoustic-rock act while retaining a shrill, otherworldly edge that sets them apart from more frivolous contemporaries such as Alisha's Attic.

Although they come from the North of England, the searing melodrama of their music and the highly strung emotional pitch of their lyrics are far more in tune with the American soul-baring style of artists such as Ani DiFranco, or even, on occasion, the late Jeff Buckley.

Favouring the sort of faintly discordant harmonic intervals that suggest a witches' coven, their eerie voices ululate to startling effect above the fidgety riffing of *Mean Girl* and swiftly galloping beat of *Sweet Butterfly*. "If I don't get a boyfriend soon/I'm bound to get a disease," they insist on

Rubber Arms, one of several songs where all manner of not-so-secret neuroses are flushed out. Not pleasant, but perhaps necessary.

DUBSTAR

Goodbye
(Food/EMI 7243 8 21217)
£13.49

ALTHOUGH their debut album, *Disgraceful*, made little impression when it was released in 1995, indie-pop durlings Dubstar have since enjoyed Top 20 hits with *Not So Manic Now* and *Stars*, and now stand poised on the brink of mainstream success.

Located in an English tradition that stretches from Kirsty MacColl and Saint Etienne all the way back to the Human League, *Goodbye* is crammed full of bright, tart little pop statements that often conceal a bitter emotional core within a heavy coating of sugar.

The album is dominated by the presence of singer Sarah Blackwood, whose frilly delivery on songs such as *My Start In Wallsend* and *It's Clear* produces an effect that is rather like being suffocated by fluffy toy bunnies, an impression clearly at odds with the



"Whereas in the past Björk's introspection was leavened by the exuberance of her performance, here she seems to have suppressed her pop instincts"

fearless attitude of lyrics such as: "I am the gum on your shoes/The prostitute who rings your family" (from *I Will Be Your Girlfriend*).

The conflict finds its resolution in the melancholy reggae

tune *It's Over* and the sad, slow *Ghost* ("I'll trace the whole world to find your ghost"), where the posing seems to give way to something more genuine.

TRAVIS

Good Feeling
(Independiente ISM 488522)
£11.99

CURRENTLY on tour with Oasis, Travis are the Glaswegian rock group whose trick is never knowingly to sound as if they are trying too hard. Perhaps they aren't. The chorus and chord sequence of *Happy* — "I'm so happy 'cause you're so happy" repeated ad nauseum — is simple to the

point of credulous, while the high incidence of songs with a slow or languid tempo makes you wonder why they bother to turn their guitars up so loud in the first place.

But they do have a knack for creating infectious, anthemic singalongs, as on the Bluesy chorus of *Tied to the 90s* and the jaunty hook of their single *U2 Girls*. And, unusually for this kind of group, they have a great line in meaningful love songs as demonstrated by *Falling Down*, *More than Us* and the disarmingly straightforward sentiment of *I Love You Anyway*. Another Del Amitri in the making, perhaps?

A touch of tuba roots the blues

HOWARD JOHNSON

GRAVITY

Right Now!
(Verve 537 801-2)

ALTHOUGH the ingredients of this album — six tubas, a rhythm section and the veteran blues singer Taj Mahal — are almost wilfully eccentric, the music it contains is spontaneous and sparkily accessible.

Some of the participants made the still-popular live Taj Mahal recording *The Real Thing* in 1971, but this is more than a "reunion" album.

Made directly after a European tour, it catches a red-hot band bursting with ideas and enthusiasm. The material ranges from a passionate but sly version of Little Willie John's classic *Fever*, through funky 1960s and 1970s showpieces, to imaginatively elegant arrangements of jazz fare such as Gil Evans's *Waltz* and Slide Hampton's *Frame for the Blues*.

But whatever they are playing, the rich, fruity sonorities of the tubas (plus occasional penny whistle or baritone saxophone) and the plaintive graininess of Taj Mahal's lived-in voice, all held together by a whip-smart rhythm section, make for a

highly unusual but consistently enjoyable album.

JOHN LAW

The Hours

(FMR CD41-V0697)

THE third and final album in a series of piano meditations sparked off by John Law's interest in early monastic music, *The Hours* takes material from the *Liber Usualis* as its starting point.

After briefly stating each of the eight plainchant "themes", Law subjects them to sometimes surprisingly robust but consistently graceful and melodious treatments, imbued with the disciplined vigour that is the most obvious legacy of his immersion over the past few years in free jazz.

Added to his recent acclaimed trio of albums of Thelonious Monk interpretations and idiosyncratic visits to standards, Law's three solo-piano plainchant albums confirm his growing reputation as one of this country's most imaginative young pianists.

CHRIS PARKER

TOP TEN ALBUMS

- | | | | |
|----|------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | (1) | Be Here Now | Oasis (Creation) |
| 2 | (2) | Butterfly | Mariah Carey (Columbia) |
| 3 | (3) | Marchin' Already | Ocean Colour Scene (MCA) |
| 4 | (4) | OK Computer | Radiohead (Parlophone) |
| 5 | (5) | White on Blonde | Texas (Mercury) |
| 6 | (6) | The Fat of the Land | Prodigy (XL Recordings) |
| 7 | (7) | Callin' all Stations | Genevieve (Virgin) |
| 8 | (8) | Much Love | Shola Arua (WEA) |
| 9 | (9) | New Forms | Roni Size/Reprazent (Talkin' Loud) |
| 10 | (10) | Older | George Michael (Virgin) |

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Figure in brackets denotes last week's position

If it's worth hearing once

Where would today's pop stars be without their predecessors?

Patrick Gilbert reports on sampling



Girl Power didn't help Emma and the other Spice Girls when their producers sampled an obscure soul track

Earlier this summer, the Spice Girls were faced with a serious accusation. It had nothing to do with the poaching of boyfriends, or with some imaginary shoplifting spree in Sainsbury's. Instead, it related to the unauthorised use of another artist's work — in this case a sample from an obscure 1970s funk record called *It's Just Begun* by the Jimmy Castor Bunch.

"In fairness, the girls didn't know anything about it," explains John Fogarty of Minder Music, the owner of the infringed copyright who stands to make a substantial sum in back royalties from the Spice Girls' multimillion-selling debut album. "Once we had approached them there was no argument. Stannard and Rowe [the group's producers] said they had sampled it from another record, and agreed to pay us."

In many respects, Minder Music was lucky to reach such a quick and amicable settlement. Every year scores of

instances of copyright infringement go undetected, losing songwriters and musicians thousands of pounds in royalties. It is a practice which is growing rapidly.

The main problem is the ubiquity of sampling, the term for "lifting" a snatch of music from an existing recording and digitally incorporating it into a new track. Muscled into vogue by the advent of hip hop and rap in the late 1980s, sampling is now an integral part of mainstream pop culture, and its innovative use by indie artists such as Beck — whose backing tracks are basically sophisticated sound collages of old records — has garnered almost universal critical acclaim.

Since 1990, when Gilbert O'Sullivan sued an American rapper called Biz Markie over

the use of a snippet from one of the 1970s pop star's songs, it has been the legal requirement for an artist sampling another's work first to gain permission from the song's copyright owner (usually the artist or publisher), as well as from the owner of the recording (usually the record company). Failure to do so is technically theft, and in America it carries a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment.

The O'Sullivan case had a profound impact on sampling culture. Within a year or two, a climate developed in which samplers and copyright owners recognised the mutual benefits of working together. "In the late 1980s, a lot of people were only interested in stopping a record coming out and claiming some damages," explains Linda Taylor of the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS), the agency that issues sampling licences. "They saw it as theft, end of story. But it's now seen as a way for record companies to exploit their back catalogues. Some artists actively try to get samples, as they know it will be a future source of income."

Of the 200 or so new singles released each week, more than a third are now believed to reproduce elements of another composition, with indie and

royalties for the track *If U Can't Dance*.

Meanwhile, sampling — illegal and otherwise — continues to thrive. "A sampler is as much a musical instrument as a guitar," argues Dean Rudland, a former office manager at Acid Jazz, a label which once had to settle out of court with Minder Music over one of its artists' samples of a Fat Back Band track. "It's robbing around with sounds. There are only 12 notes, but there's an infinite number of sounds. Used creatively by gifted producers, it's an amazing tool."

Sampling is now an integral part of the pop culture

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EDUCATION

John O'Leary on discontent over Whitehall control of schools; and Mark Whitaker on a radical Chicago experiment

Teachers protest at ministry regulation

Teachers' representatives were under no illusions about the new administration's tough line on standards when Labour took office. David Blunkett, Education and Employment Secretary, had abandoned his party's "no blame" culture in opposition and was promising a string of initiatives.

Armed with an overwhelming electoral mandate and promising support as well as pressure, ministers enjoyed a lengthy honeymoon period with the teaching unions. This week, however, there have been signs of strain in the relationship.

The cause is what many teachers see as an unhealthy centralisation of power in the hands of ministers. They are faced with guidelines on everything from homework to the amount of time to be spent teaching reading. Some teachers are wondering what is left for them to decide.

The last straw was the suggestion by Mr Blunkett that the hotline set up to take comments on the schools White Paper could be kept open for parents to complain. David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, complained of a "big brother" approach to schools.

Dissatisfaction had set in well before that, however. The prep schools' annual conference was the unlikely source of the first and most intemperate criticism, as Bob Acheson, Headmaster of Clifton College Preparatory School, Bristol, gave warning of "intellectual fascism" if the Government continued to be so prescriptive.

This week, the Secondary Heads Association (SHA) delivered a more measured critique, accusing ministers of stifling the creativity needed from teachers if standards were to rise. Bruce Douglas, the SHA's new president, said the Government would go "blundering on", failing to improve the education system, unless schools were given more responsibility.

Mr Douglas, head master of Bransford Community College, in Lincoln, says: "We are not looking for conflict with the Government, as long as they stand by some of their own rhetoric. If they do not, they risk a smaller, meaner system with lesser leaders and a poorer education for the young people of this country."

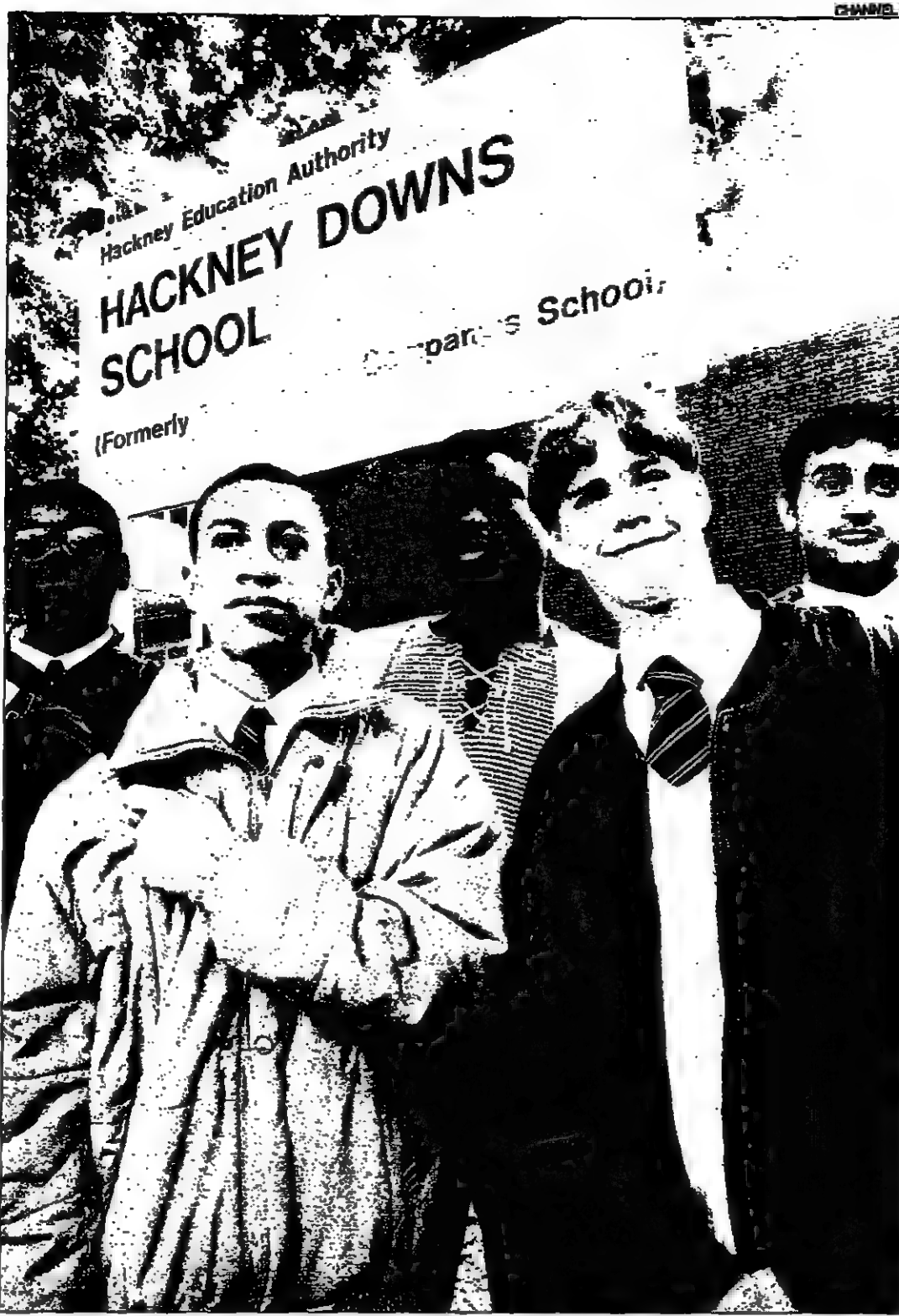
Mr Douglas, speaking at a London press conference to mark the start of his year in office, said the failure of a minority of schools was determining ministers' approach to the whole system. He appealed to politicians to drop the "falsehoods" that education is a disaster area and that the only route to improvement was for them to take more of the decisions.

He said the current approach would have a damaging effect on teacher recruitment. "I think the real reason that teacher supply is at risk is that we have moved away from the idea that teaching is a big 'can do' job, where professionals can exercise their judgment."

The SHA is not alone in its concerns. Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, reminded ministers after one recent initiative that some of the methods they now seek to outlaw were required practice not long ago in the local authorities they controlled. "Politicians had no monopoly on wisdom then and they do not now," he said.

Ministers would deny that they are failing to live up to their promises of partnership with the teaching profession. Mr Blunkett spoke warmly this week at a conference run jointly by the National Union of Teachers and *The Times Educational Supplement*, and union representatives have been included in the extensive talks on the Government's forthcoming legislation.

Yet on big occasions, such as the Prime Minister's education summit and when members are cho-



Intervention by a "task force" failed to prevent the closure of Hackney Downs school last year

sen for groups such as the standards task force, hand-picked exponents of the Government's initiatives take the place of teachers' representatives.

So are organisations such as the SHA simply piqued at being cut out of the action? And is the Government right to look elsewhere for advice? This was not the first time that the SHA has crossed swords with Labour after its presidential introduction. Last year the association's claims that the party's plans would allow LEAs to wield power over schools once more prompted angry denials.

Some of the association's criticisms this week took little account of political reality — for example on

the funding of education, which SHA's leaders find inadequate. But the charge of overprescription will strike a chord in classrooms.

As well as being contrary to management theory on getting the best out of a workforce, most of the Government's direction relies on the co-operation of the teaching profession.

Parents may like the idea of a strong Government and feel that schools need some firm direction. But Mr Blunkett has acknowledged previously that he must win the backing of ordinary teachers to meet the ambitious targets he is setting. This will be doubly true as

the supply of teachers is outstripped by demand.

Intervention such as yesterday's decision to send an improvement team into Hackney will command the support of many teachers, as long as they believe that the drive for improvement leaves a professional role for them.

Some will see the much-vaunted consultation on the schools White Paper as a key test of the Government's commitment to partnership. The regional conferences, which ended yesterday, disclosed alternatives to the current proposals. If the legislation to be framed later this year does not reflect at least some of them, more teachers are likely to share the SHA's disillusionment.

Schools reform blows through the Windy City

There are tears in her eyes as 14-year-old Antoinette talks about having to spend another year in elementary school rather than moving on with her friends to high school. She is one of more than 11,000 Chicago children who are being made to repeat a whole year of school work. The reason? They didn't do well enough in a one-off test of basic comprehension and maths skills. Children, so the argument goes in Chicago these days, must be made accountable for how they perform.

If there is anxiety in Britain's schools as to what the Government's "zero tolerance" approach to raising standards might mean, then what has happened to schools in Chicago over the past two years will do nothing to dispel it. Especially as Tim Brighouse, vice-chairman of the Department for Education's new Standards Task Force, is taking a close interest in Chicago school reform.

By the end of the Eighties the city had what was widely regarded as America's worst urban school system. Only a third of pupils reached the national average in reading, and 43 per cent of those who started high school dropped out. When they did, the drug gangs were ready for them. Richard Daley, Chicago's Mayor, has staked his reputation on improving performance in the city's 550 public schools.

Since 1995 the pace of reform has been startling: \$800 million has been raised for structural improvements; support services have been privatised; special schools have been opened for disruptive pupils; truancy and teenage pregnancy have been targeted.

The whole strategy is underpinned by a no-excuses-for-failure philosophy of accountability. If children fail, they must pay the penalty: the same applies to the teachers. And failure is judged by one solitary standard — how pupils do in what are called the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills. These are marked by computer and the day that children take them has become the single most important day in the school year.

For pupils, failure in the test means a compulsory six-week summer school; that is how 47,000 children spent their vacation this year. They were tested again at the end of the programme, and those that still failed — like Antoinette — were held back for a year. Schools where too few pupils

reach national average scores in the tests suffer Chicago's equivalent of "naming and shaming". They are placed "on probation" and have to accept advice from city-appointed private-sector consultants as to how to improve their performance. Those that still fail to improve sufficiently quickly face the ultimate sanction of "reconstitution" — which happened to seven Chicago high schools this summer.

In July every member of staff in these schools — from the head to the caretaker — was sacked. They were told they could reapply for their jobs, but of those that did 40 per cent were told not to bother reporting back in September. Careers, some of 30 years or more, were put on the line at a 30-minute interview before a panel appointed by the school board. And head teachers admit that they weren't just looking for bad teachers: they

were also looking for those unsympathetic to the reform strategy. Critics of the Chicago reforms say that it has been difficult to speak out against it, but many increasingly fear that the strategy is a runaway horse. Academic experts on school improvement are claiming that education is being reduced to preparation for the tests of basic skills: parents and local school councils — Chicago's version of boards of governors — are complaining that they're being frozen out of any dialogue.

As yet, Chicago's 27,000 teachers have been compliant — but that looks set to change. At the beginning of next academic year they will be presented with a curriculum — from kindergarten to the end of high school — that has been entirely scripted for them by the school board, down to detailed lesson plans for each day of the year. It is an extension of what already happens in summer schools, where monitors are employed to check that teachers are on the right page for the day. It will be, as the chief executive of the Chicago school system is proud to call it, "teacher-proof instruction". But it is something his critics say will force Chicago education into a straightjacket.

If close advisers to the Government are watching Chicago, then so should everyone involved with Britain's schools. Because, as yet, it is the most developed model of where zero tolerance might lead.

Mark Whitaker reports on Chicago school reform for *File on 4*, on Radio 4, at 7.30pm next Tuesday

Everyone, from the head to the caretaker, is sacked

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The forum will be held at Church House, Dean's Yard, Westminster, London SW1P 3NZ, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets at £10 (concessions £7.50) include an audio cassette featuring extracts from each of the books and information about the authors. Subject to demand, the event will be interpreted by sign language.

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Whatever happened to English grammar?

Language empowers; lack of it disempowers. Do we, or do we not, want schoolchildren to be empowered? The question suggested itself again this week, as the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority confirmed that its proposed grammar tests would not be compulsory for another year.

What most pupils are being taught in the name of English is depressingly disempowering. Story, report or diary writing and a whole host of other "creative" activities are usually accompanied by woolly and superficial "English literature", often working on banal books of dubious worth. The latter is usually focused firmly on content and ignores the fact that all writing consists of language.

And that's English teaching. Scant attention is paid to the nuts and bolts of how English fits together. It's like asking people to build a house without showing them how to lay bricks. Of course, the house will be hopeless and so is the written English of most school-leavers.

A despairing magazine editor told me recently of a work experience student assigned to him. "She has an English degree and is doing a course in journalism but she can't construct a sentence, let alone write a letter. She's actually unemployed," he said.

Are we to believe that the rules of basic grammar were too difficult for that young woman, now in her fourth year of higher education, to grasp? Unlikely. The awful truth is almost certainly that no one in her 17 years of full-time education has ever bothered to teach her the



Many students lack the basic equipment to build a proper sentence, says Susan Elkin

elementary rules of grammar or explained to her why they are important.

Grammar and punctuation are mutually supportive. Surely a pupil of, say, 11 or so can grasp that in the sentence "My sister, who is learning to drive, would like a car of her own" the dependent clause, "who is learning to drive", must be marked off from the main clause with a pair of commas. Or that you can move the parts of the sentence around to create variety and nuance.

Help is at hand, however. Shirley Russell is the author of the excellent book *Grammar, Structure and Style* (OUP, £12.99). Although it

purports to be a textbook for 16 to 18-year-olds studying for one of the newish A-level English language courses, Ms Russell says: "I wrote it also as a self-help manual for teachers. Few of those under 40 know anything about grammar and I hoped this book might help to break into the vicious circle, because teachers can't teach what they don't know. Yet children lose out so much if they don't understand the basic core of grammar. They can't write essays or express themselves properly."

Nonetheless, Ms Russell dismisses the complex detail of old-fashioned clause analysis. "Whoever heard of a writer saying 'I think I'll have a noun clause here'?" she asks. That is why she includes in her book the rather alarming disclaimer: "You are not asked to learn the grammar discussed in this section but simply to be aware that it once existed."

She is, however, a passionate advocate of teaching sentence structure, parts of speech and the supporting punctuation to all pupils, using the correct vocabulary. Tellingly though, she cannot find a publisher willing to commission her to write a short commonsense grammar book for use at Key Stage 3 or GCSE.

Accurately expressed and punctuated use of English adds to the clarity of communication. Are English teachers too insecure — or too conditioned to the hedonistic belief that all lessons have to be "entertaining" rather than rigorous — to be single-mindedly intent on empowering their pupils by improving their mastery of language? If so, then they might as well pack up and go home.

Chris Barton steels himself for the start of a new term

"BACK TO work then?" asks neighbour, weeks after modest holiday and the university term just started.

Head down at tray. Long list of new personal tutors. Longer list of personal tutors' duties: no sex with fine; no hour without not fine; explain modular system to, oh Lord.

Push past noticeboards. Reach room, unlock, lock, lean on back of door. Read last of overnight post, remember when autumn return produced nothing but three months' pay slips; this September's invigilation and marking duties alone exceeded those of many a previous golden June.

More requests for references from graduates. The less well they do after leaving, the longer they use your name. Woolworths sales assistantship for a class member of 93? Well... HMSO envelope, better. It is a badly kept secret that I act as unofficial talent spotter for the security services. Two of my placements waved gratefully from their Securitor van the other day.

Evening-class list. Well done, lots of names from last

When September comes



week's final sales gig. Remember when those big buildings in the middle of your town were dedicated to keeping you out? We could have dressed up like so many Mr Quelches (with or without canes) for those first open days for would-be part-time students. Now they expect a time-share presentation.

Throw dart at Open University advertisement pasted on

far wall: "Now you can study law while working or looking after your family." Pah! Our first class of night school graduates are now pretty much at the tops of their trees. Employers are beginning to get the point about doing it the hard way: they're mighty quick on the uptake out there in the good old real world. Odd, considering that the rest of the world laughed at our industry and commerce while fighting to get into our higher education system.

It's tempting to adapt the one about borrowers and libraries and say that without the students, the place would be great. And for about a week in June it is. But there is nothing, absolutely nothing, like the first sight of a new group. One moment a void, then faces, then voices, then characters, some to be known ever after. The price is stage fright, of course: you know you're good but they don't: every year's the first time.

Come in. Welcome. Welcome back even.

The author is Professor of Family Law at Staffordshire University.

D/EE

THE SCHOOL LEAVING LAW HAS CHANGED!

This is important news for young people who'll be 16 during this school year, and for their parents and their future employers.

There is now a single date when young people can legally leave school and take a full time job. That date is the last Friday in June; in 1998 it will be FRIDAY 26 JUNE. Young people won't be able to leave before then even if they're already 16. The Government intends that the change in the law will help more young people get GCSEs and other useful qualifications, and benefit from high-quality work experience, before they leave school. Further details are available from schools, local education authorities, the Careers Service or Job Centres, or by writing to: School Attendance Team, DfEE, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT. Email: info@dfee.gov.uk

Torrance in search of solace



Pearce, who has been commuting to the United States to play on the Futures Tour — she won an event in Syracuse last month — had no such worries and did not drop a shot, recording birdies at all four of the par-fives. Hjorth, a big hitter, did not — she had a bogey six at the 2nd — but had birdies at four of the next five holes.

Slough set their sights on striking gold in Europe

This year one team only will be automatically relegated from the second division, with the seventh-placed club going into the play-offs.

England overwhelm Egypt

ENGLAND: J Edworthy, J Evernett, Murrell K Hocher, B Gerard, R Stamp, D Haydon, M Johnson, T Matthews, A Boyse, M Peam, A Smmons, Subs used: D Matthews, R Irvine P Wicks S Humphries

EGYPT: Mohamed El Bediers, Ahmed Mandour, Ednam El Said, Amro El Fathi, Hosam Sumar, Walid Mostafa, Hosam Zohry, El Said Mousa, Mohamed Mahmoud, Ahmed Wafay El Said Gaballa

Subs used: I Said Hussein, Ahmed Abouz, Ahmed Talar, Mohamed El Mah

Uganda: S Qureshi (India) and E Denis (Belgium).

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FOOTBALL

Premiership clubs can rule Europe once more

By OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

AS SOON as the draw was made for the Champions' League, the amateur soothsayers started reading the runes. Beware the sides that march on England, was the message they saw. In this country, the recent tendency has been to rubbish the FA Cup and to exaggerate the qualities of clubs from Italy, Spain and Germany. So it proved again.

Nobody really bothered to make many predictions about Newcastle United's match with Barcelona on Wednesday night, because it was widely assumed that they would be played off the pitch by the Catalan team. And Manchester United? Well, their fate was sealed from the moment that they found themselves in the same group as Juventus.

Wednesday night changed all that. It broke the spell that the name of Barcelona had begun to cast, exposed the fact that the best of Spain is no longer streets ahead of the best of England and that, as Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, had said in Kosice on Tuesday afternoon, Premiership clubs were nearing the end of the painful game of catch-up that they had to play once their exile from European competition was over.

After United had arrived back from Slovakia, Martin Edwards, their chairman, said that his team's chances of success were being undermined by the refusal to reduce the Premiership to 18 teams. The four groups of six, proposed by Juventus for next season, would force them to play ten games in Europe before Christmas and create a daunting fixture list.

That, though, serves to underline the advances that English clubs are making. The victories for United and Newcastle on Wednesday do not mean that they will win their groups, nor even that they will qualify, but they fitted the mood of optimism that has been sweeping through English football since the 1996 and the success in Le Tournoi de France.

Conversely, although Barcelona were praised for much of the football that they played last year under Bobby Robson, the idea that their games were all miniature masterpieces, things of art and beauty, is romantic nonsense. In the flesh, they

suffered from the same bouts of sterility that afflict England's clubs.

The lesson that the European hand-wringers here seem unable or unwilling to comprehend is that some English clubs are more European in their approach than the Europeans. Faustino Asprilla, the hero of St James' Park, is hardly your traditional up-and-at-em centre forward, the blend at Chelsea and Arsenal is as exotic, the squad system as extensively used, as anywhere on the Continent.

It is the consensus now that United are only a world-class centre forward away from being the favourites to win the European Cup for the first time since 1968. Andy Cole may have scored two minutes from the end, a consolation for earlier misses, but United's comfortable 3-0 win against FC Kosice proved little. Taken together with the crushing defeat that Juventus dealt Feyenoord, though, it suggested that group B has already become a two-horse race.

A clear indicator of which team is likely to prevail will come a week on Wednesday when United face Juventus at Old Trafford. Ten days later, England play Italy at international level to decide which country qualifies automatically for the World Cup finals in France next year. Gary Neville, outstanding once more at right back for United and rapidly becoming one of his country's stalwarts, said that he believed both matches would re-establish England's reputation as a pre-eminent power in world football.

"Those ten days can make England great again," he said. "If we beat Juventus at home, I think that will give the whole nation a lot of confidence going into the international. If we do not qualify for the World Cup it will be an absolute disaster, but I am confident we can get the result in Italy. If we don't get the right results, then everything could go pear-shaped for the rest of the year."

"It is about time England and English teams started to dominate Europe again. Leicester, Liverpool, Newcastle and ourselves all got brilliant results this week. I want English teams to win all three competitions this season and I think it can happen. I think we are on the brink of a great year."

Rare talent in full bloom

David Maddock takes great delight in seeing a high-class striker at the peak of his powers

Amid the celebrations that crashed around the Newcastle United dressing-room after their unlikely victory over Barcelona sat the silent figure of Faustino Asprilla. "Everyone was going raving mad, but he just plonked himself down in the corner with a huge smile all over his face."

So explained Asprilla's teammate, John Beresford. He is typical of the Colombia striker. He is a man of few words but he is an enigmatic character who has a smile for everyone at St James' Park. Every morning, before training, Keith Gillespie finds his windscreen, wipers pulled off his shiny new BMW. It is Asprilla being impish. That same sense of mischief runs through his play on the pitch and it is this that makes him so unpredictable and so difficult an opponent.

Asprilla proved against Barcelona on Wednesday evening that he is among the best forwards playing in the world today. It was the complete all-round display of which a striker dreams. Pace, intelligence, skill and strength combined to make him a formidable rival.

Yet there remains within his personality a contradiction. He appears in one sense totally committed to his art, but in another detached from the sport that offered him a living. Even his demeanour displays this contradiction. Against Barcelona he took a penalty under intense pressure and yet made it appear like a kick-about.

He has failed to master the English language but then he does not seem to need it. His play spoke volumes on Wednesday. Even his team-mates are in awe of him. "I don't think I have seen a striker with such a complete range of skills. There's nothing he can't do," Ian Rush said. "Look at how he played against Barcelona. He scored three great goals, was brilliant in the air, held the ball up perfectly, went past people and produced tricks which had you blinking in disbelief. He deserves to be bracketed with the best."

Yet, for the first 12 months with Newcastle, he was used as an easy target for the critics who dismissed his individual style of play. Asprilla arrived on Tyneside 20 months ago and his impact was so minimal that he was blamed for his club having lost the championship to Manchester United.



Asprilla shares his joy with the crowd at St James' Park

Such accusations were grossly unfair, because Asprilla is a rare talent that needed time to settle down into the alien game that British football is to him. Now he has come to terms with the sport in his adopted country and suddenly he has gained the recognition that his range of skills deserved.

Kevin Keegan, his former manager at Newcastle, was a happy man on Wednesday night as he witnessed Asprilla deliver so spectacularly. Keegan believes the forward is now being used in his best

position. "He is better up front on his own, without a partner," Keegan said. "That's what he does for Colombia and he does it incredibly well."

Whatever Asprilla thought about his performance on Wednesday, he did not feel inclined to share it, not even with his own manager and team-mates. As he left St James' Park, he ambled towards the waiting media and said simply: "You can say it for me. I don't care." That sums up the man's glorious indifference.

Grobelaar and Segers to face FA charges

By JOHN GOODBODY

BRUCE GROBBELAAR and Hans Segers could still receive life bans after being charged yesterday with breaking the Football Association's rules on betting. Although the two goalkeepers and John Fashanu, the former Wimbledon and England forward, were last month found not guilty of match-fixing after a second trial, they now face another legal struggle on a different charge brought by the football authorities.

The FA said that it had acted because the two goalkeepers had admitted, at their criminal trials, receiving money for forecasting the results of matches in which they had played. Any suspension from the game would cover managing and coaching, as well as playing, and would automatically be enforced by FIFA, the governing body, making the ban worldwide.

Grobelaar and Segers, who have 14 days to respond to the charge, are free in the meantime to play professionally. Grobelaar, 39, the former Liverpool and Zimbabwe goalkeeper, has just signed a one-month contract with Oxford United as cover for the injured Phil Whitehead and is set to make his debut against Sheffield United in the Nationwide League first division tomorrow. He has played for Southampton and Plymouth Argyle since his arrest in November 1994.

Segers, 35, the former Wimbledon and Nottingham Forest goalkeeper, has yet to play for Wolverhampton Wanderers, his present club. However, he trained with the rest of the squad yesterday for the first division match away to Sunderland tomorrow.

Fashanu has retired from playing but has applied to become a football agent. Sir John Smith, the former deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, has recommended that details of the trials be forwarded to FIFA to help FIFA when it considers Fashanu's application.

Sir John, who was brought

in by the FA after the acquittals of the three players and the Malaysian businessman, Heng Suan Lim, at Winchester Crown Court in August, is preparing a report on football rules and betting, which will be published next month.

After the court verdict, the FA has dropped its allegations of match-fixing against Grobelaar, originally brought in November 1994. These were held over while the criminal cases took place.

David Hewitt, Grobelaar's solicitor, said: "The FA's decision once and for all vindicates Bruce, who has consistently denied any involvement in match-fixing." He added that he expected Grobelaar to ask for a personal hearing.

Mel Goldberg, Segers's solicitor, said that the Dutchman was "very disappointed" by the FA's decision to charge the player for breaking the rules on betting. "Hans feels that he has suffered enough over the last 2½ years and has already cleared his name in a court of law."

The only precedent for the Football Association is the case in the 1960s when ten footballers, including the England and Peter Swan, and their Sheffield Wednesday colleague, David Layne, were found guilty of conspiring to defraud bookmakers and sent to prison.

The FA banned Key and Swan for life for betting against their own team in a League match, in which they were playing, against Ipswich Town in 1962. They later appealed against the bans, which were lifted after seven years.

As a result of the revelations, bookmakers, concerned about the integrity of the sport, stopped taking bets on individual matches. However, with the game's slow return to respectability, bookmakers now accept single bets on many matches but still apply a minimum of trebles to non-

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

So far our Refresher series on play at trick one has been concerned with No-Trump contracts. It is equally important to consider your early play carefully when there is a trump suit.

Dealer South Love all

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: queen of diamonds.

Diagram of final position:

North: ♠ 10 4, ♥ 10 7 2, ♦ A K 8, ♣ 8 4. South: ♠ A 8 2, ♥ 6 5, ♦ Q J 10 9 3, ♣ A 10 5.

Diagram of final position:

North: ♠ K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2, ♥ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2, ♦ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2, ♣ A K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2.

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: queen of diamonds.

Diagram of final position:

North: ♠ 10 4, ♥ 10 7 2, ♦ A K 8, ♣ 8 4. South: ♠ A 8 2, ♥ 6 5, ♦ Q J 10 9 3, ♣ A 10 5.

This was a good sequence, both players supporting their partner's suits. South chose to play in his own suit for two reasons: first, he knew it was a strong combination; and second, on some lay-outs (as this one) it might be difficult for the defenders to attack his club holding.

With reasonable breaks declarer has no shortage of tricks (four spades, four hearts and two diamonds). He has a certain loser in each major, so it looks as if the contract will hinge on the position of the ace of clubs. If declarer wins the king of diamonds and plays a trump, West will win and continue diamonds. Declarer will win and play ace and another heart, ducking in order to preserve his communications. But East will win and play a club and declarer will lose two tricks in the suit.

Declarer can do better. He should duck the opening lead in both hands. West will probably continue diamonds. Declarer wins with the king and cashes the ace of diamonds discarding a heart. He now plays a heart to the ace, a heart to the king and ruffs a heart with the king of spades. With dummy's hearts established, he plays the queen of trumps, ensuring a dummy entry with the jack or ten.

If East had the ace of trumps the contract would still hinge on the position of the ace of clubs, but when West has it the contract is assured.

For details of *The Times* Midland Private Banking National Bridge Challenge, call the organisers on 0181 942 9506.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Veteran's moves

After four games of the match between veteran Viktor Korchnoi and French prodigy Etienne Bacrot, the experienced former world championship contender had moved into a slight lead, thanks to his tactical acumen in the following game.

In the opening stage Korchnoi deliberately avoided main-line theory. After a fierce series of exchanges he emerged into an endgame with a slight material advantage which he succeeded in converting to victory.

White: Viktor Korchnoi
Black: Etienne Bacrot
Albert, France
September 1997

English Opening

1 d4 e5
2 c4 c6
3 Nc3 d5
4 Nf3 Nf6
5 e3 e6
6 Be2 Be7
7 Bg5 Be6
8 Bx6 Bx6
9 Nxd5 Nxd5
10 e4 e5
11 f4 f5
12 g4 g5
13 h4 h5
14 Nf3 Nf6
15 Bg5 Be6
16 Bx6 Bx6
17 Qd3 Qd5
18 Ne7 Ne6
19 Nc5 Nc6
20 Kf2 Kf7
21 Nf3 Nf6
22 Bg5 Be6
23 Bx6 Bx6
24 Kf2 Kf7
25 Nf3 Nf6
26 Bg5 Be6
27 Bx6 Bx6

Matthew MacFadyen has regained his position as British champion in the Oriental game of go. The south-dan player from Leamington, who dominated British go in the 1980s and has won the European championship four times, completed a clean sweep in the title match at Milton Keynes last weekend to defeat Charles Matthews 3-0.

Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

White to play. This position is from the game Glek - Bezd, Marigny 1997.

White could capture on g6 with bishop or pawn, but there would then be no obvious winning continuation. What did he do instead?

Solution on page 42

Magnificent seven ride on in Cup

Non-League Football by WALTER GAMMIE

HEARD the one about the team that travelled for an FA Cup replay with nine men, finished it with seven and still won 1-0? Preposterous as it may seem, that is just what Weston-super-Mare achieved at Cinderford Town on Tuesday night. "Well, it was seven and a half men really," Keith Refault, the Weston secretary said. "We started with only nine men, had another sent off and one who was injured and could do no more than hobble up and down the touchline."

The short-term cause of Weston's plight was the drawn match last Saturday that left them down to nine men. "We had hoped to persuade a player who had left us to come back for one more match, but he couldn't," Refault said. "And then we had a 37-year-old goalkeeper who we were prepared to send onto the outfield, but he dislocated his shoulder."

After the secret of Weston's success over their Dr Martens League rivals? "We played two at the back, five in the middle and one up front, Danny O'Hagan, a former Plymouth

Argyle player, who kept three defenders busy." Refault said. "They didn't seem to know how to handle it."

"Len Ashurst, our manager, was magnificent. He was on the touchline orchestrating things from start to finish. It was like having an extra player. All his experience shone through."

The goal, beautifully struck from 20 yards, came from Craig Dunn in the 78th minute. Seven minutes later O'Hagan, "who had been hatched to bits all night", was sent off for retaliation. Ryan Souter then finished the match as a passenger, after badly damaging his ankle.

How did Cinderford react to their humiliation? "They were very magnanimous," Refault said. "Their officials were a great deal more civilised about it than I would have been."

The background to Weston's fate is severe pruning of Ashurst's budget, but Salisbury City, their opponents in the second qualifying round tomorrow week, will find that team spirit remains in unlimited supply.

WEDNESDAY'S LATE RESULTS

EUROPEAN CUP CHAMPIONS' LEAGUE: Group A: Galatasaray (Turk) 0, Borussia Dortmund 0; Group B: Sporting CP 0, FC Barcelona 0; Group C: Real Madrid 0, FC Bayern 0; Group D: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group E: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group F: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group G: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group H: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group I: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group J: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group K: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group L: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group M: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group N: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group O: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group P: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group Q: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group R: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group S: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group T: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group U: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group V: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group W: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group X: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group Y: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group Z: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AA: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AB: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AC: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AD: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AE: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AF: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AG: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AH: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AI: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AJ: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AK: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AL: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AM: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AN: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AO: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AP: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AQ: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AR: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AS: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AT: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AU: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AV: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AW: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AX: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AY: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; Group AZ: FC Barcelona 0, FC Bayern 0; 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The party's definitely over for yachtsmen in round-the-world race

Whitbread drinking had to stop

I was during the SORC regatta in Florida, back in February 1981, that my Whitbread round-the-world race career began, when I plucked up the courage to approach David Bongers, the notorious South African sailor.

Bongers had a reputation as a tough guy, a hard sailor and a big drinker and I was quite intimidated by him. But my desire to get my first ride on a Whitbread boat overcame my fear. Bongers, who was to sail on board Paddy Kuttel's *Xargo III* in the next race, agreed to let me help him to deliver a 42-foot yacht across the Atlantic to Ireland. If I made the grade, I would join Kuttel's 1981-82 Whitbread crew.

Four of us left Fort Lauderdale for the 3,000-mile trip to Cork on the Rob Holland-designed *Recession*. This was a boat with somewhat erratic downwind characteristics. I remember, on the second day of the trip, being on watch alone with the spinnaker up as darkness fell and the wind got up.

I was banging on the deck to attract Bongers' attention and he eventually slid the hatch open. His wild eyes, surrounded by an afro head of hair and beard, demanded to know what the matter was. "We have to take the spinnaker down, we are out of control," I shouted. "If you can't steer, you're a big puss," he replied and went below. I guess that was the day that I learnt to steer downwind in a big blow.

The race boat, *Xargo III*, was a Sparkman & Stephens blue-water cruising yacht, but it was not the ideal racing boat, but it was the one Kuttel had chosen for his first attempt at the Whitbread. Eleven first-time Whitbread sailors set off on the adventure of a lifetime. We had our own supply of KVV vintage brandy and wine - weight was not the crucial issue it is today. Those were amateur times and we were not answerable to a leading sponsor, so we made the most of the free parties.

Very little maintenance was done to the yachts at the stopovers, because they didn't need it. Instead, the emphasis was on having a good time and exploring. Although we



As competitors get set for Sunday's start, Paul Standbridge says there has never been so much at stake

raced as hard as we could, there were occasions when the KVV got the better of us and I remember some dangerous sails calls and even crew missing a whole watch due to overindulging. Our best result on *Xargo III* was second place on leg three.

In the next race, in 1985 - the fourth in the Whitbread series - we got a purpose-built racer, *Atlantic Privateer*, an 8ft Bruce Farr-designed maxi. Again Kuttel was the owner-skipper. Bongers was the sailing master, but the crew were a wild bunch. Misbehaviour in Uruguay before the race, when several ended up in jail, cost us our valuable sponsor, Apple.

In the end, the boat sailed most of the race unsponsored, with Kuttel paying the bills. We were first in leg two to Auckland and continued our rampage round the world. This time there was no brandy while we were sailing, but we made up for it when we got ashore. Those were probably the best times we would ever have on a Whitbread, but the times were changing fast.

In 1989, Rothmans arrived with a £5 million budget. With Lawrie Smith as skipper, we were ready for business. Training started at 7am five mornings a week for 13 months! We raced hard, we



The crew of Toshiba put in some late practice on the Solent for the race on Sunday

worked hard and, in our limited free time, we had a cocktail.

It was a very competitive race with ten maxis in hot pursuit of first place. Now we were eating freeze-dried food and sitting on the rail for hours on end. We finished fourth, but the party was most definitely over.

In the last race, in 1993-94, the Whitbread 60 made its first appearance, more like a dinghy than an offshore racing yacht. I was with Smith again on the fully-sponsored

Intrum Justitia. The pressure was on like never before - the boats were evenly matched and intense concentration was required to get an edge.

The enjoyment now was in the speed of the boat, not the drunken parties. *Intrum* set the fastest 24-hour record for a monohull of 428 miles - it was the thrill of a lifetime. We finished second overall in the 60 class.

So, on Sunday, I am starting my fifth Whitbread, with eight stopovers and ten almost identical W60s. I am racing on

Toshiba, managed by Team Dennis Conner and skippered by the intense Chris Dickson, and there will be no excuses for coming second. Training starts at 6am, six days a week, the sail programme is more complex, the freeze-dried food the same, though there is even less of it in the never-ending quest to save weight.

It is going to be intense, tough and it's going to be my last. We have had the adventure, the fun, the maxis and Whitbread 60s. Who knows what will happen next.

Britain enters into the cup spirit again

By Edward Gorman
SAILING CORRESPONDENT

THE British America's Cup campaign for Auckland in 2000 yesterday came into the open with an impressive presentation of its design and research programme and the announcement of the principal technical partners.

If there remained doubts as to who will lead the sailing side, Lawrie Smith took the afternoon off from his preparations for the Whitbread round-the-world race to be confirmed officially as Gosport as the "director of sailing" for the campaign. The syndicate, which operates under the auspices of the Royal Dorset Yacht Club, hopes to

capture the public imagination under the title *Spirit of Britain*.

Smith is planning to go straight from the Whitbread race, which starts from Cowes on Sunday, into the America's Cup build-up. He will decide who will sail on the boat, who will steer it and all aspects of the on-the-water programme. He said British sailors would predominate and the best available talent would be picked.

Smith named John Mericks, the Olympic silver medalist, as an example of the up-and-coming stars he would be looking at and did not rule out working with Chris Law, the veteran match-racer.

The syndicate is led by Professor

Andrew Graves, of the University of Bath and MIT. In the core group is Ian Howlett, who will design two race boats, and the sail-maker, Angus Melrose. The main technical partners are the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency at Gosport, where the syndicate will have its first office, the universities of Bath, Bristol and Southampton, Silicon Graphics, SP Systems, the British Marine Industries Federation and the Parametric Technology Corporation.

Although the design capability is effectively in place, the syndicate still requires most of its estimated £15 million budget, for which it targets major commercial companies. Mel-

rose said he hoped boat building could begin in 12 months.

Prof Graves believes the campaign - which will mark Britain's return to the America's Cup after being absent for the last three - should be the first of a series of tilts at international sailing's biggest prize. He wants the *Spirit of Britain* to demonstrate the best in British engineering, design and sailing talent and hopes for government support and backing from the National Lottery.

In the recent past, he said, British know-how had been used to win the Cup by foreign-based syndicates. Now it was time for Britain to use those resources itself.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 38

ANANIAS

(a) With his wife Sapphira sold his possessions but gave only part of the proceeds to the apostles. Upon being rebuked by Peter, he fell down dead. Ignorant of this fatality, Sapphira came three hours later practising the same deception and, being discovered, also fell down dead. Which seems bloody.

SHEM

(c) The eldest son of Noah and eponymous progenitor of the Semitic races. While his brother Japheth he managed to cover Noah's nakedness without seeing it. Abraham was descended from him.

ZADOK

(c) A priest. With Nathan the prophet he played a decisive part in securing the throne for Solomon upon the death of David. The Establishment was split between Solomon and his brother Adonijah. Zadok was rewarded with the office of chief priest, which his family held until the time of the Maccabees. The Sadducees may have got their name from him. Handel's anthem for the coronation of George II in Westminster Abbey in 1727 begins "Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet anointed Solomon King..."

CALEB

(b) Son of Jephthah of the tribe of Judah, close companion of Joshua and, with him, the only one of the Israelites who crossed both the Red Sea and the River Jordan into the Promised Land. Joshua the Son of Nun/ And Caleb the Son of Jephthah/ Were the only two/ Who ever got through/ To the Land of Milk and Honey.

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1 Rf7 Qxd7 2 Nxb5 Qxb6 and now the most accurate move is 3 Qc7+ when Black must resign.

SPEEDWAY

Hancock's friend turns foe

By Tony Hoare

GREG HANCOCK, the world championship leader, goes into the final grand prix of the season tomorrow night knowing that the only man with a realistic chance of stopping him from taking the title is his closest friend in the sport.

Billy Hamill, the world champion, is second in the standings and insists that there will be no favours in Vojens, Denmark, as he chases a second world title.

The pair, both 27 and American, were team-mates with Cradley Heath, the British League team, from 1990 until last season and also form the most successful racing outfit in speedway, Team Exide. Hancock, who has

won two grands prix this year, holds a 12-point lead in the world championship standings and needs to finish at least fifth in the Danish grand prix to secure the crown.

Should he finish lower than fifth, however, and his team-mate win the meeting, then Hamill will become the first rider in ten years successfully to defend the world title. Hamill said: "It was a lifetime achievement to win last year and I am striving to win it again. It would be great to do it back-to-back. I am the only guy who can stop Greg now and that is what I am aiming to do."

"It will be no holds barred. I wouldn't expect that from Greg if the situation was

turned and I'm sure he doesn't expect it from me. We are both striving for the same trophy.

"For Greg to win would be a major achievement and I would be very happy for him, as he was for me last year. If he has won, then so be it and I will be there to enjoy the celebration party. Until then, my eyes are on the world championship."

Hancock said: "I am expecting no favours from Billy because he has everything to go for as well. Winning the world championship means everything to me and I want to go and fulfil my dream. I am looking forward to coming away with the world championship."

Angling for the Nile perch

The Big Catch
BBC2, 8.00pm

"I suppose my style is somewhere between Jeremy Clarkson and Michael Palin," says the presenter of this series on international angling, former top showbiz agency Liam Dale. Well, it isn't. But if you're into hunting, hooking and landing huge exotic creatures - and weighting them as they writhe and toss - then this is for you (Britain has, after all, "3.5 million passionate anglers"). The chunky Liam, sailing with different fishermen each week, will be tracking everything from state in Scotland to Beluga sturgeon in Kazakhstan. He begins on Lake Nasser in Egypt - 2,400 square miles of freshwater created by the Aswan Dam. His quarry is the Nile perch - a voracious carnivorous weighing up to 200lb. To be fair, the anglers throw back most of what they catch and are turned on more by a good fight than a kill.

Ground Force
BBC2, 8.30pm

Following on the heels of the reels and baiters, a rather gentle series - a sort of *Gardeners' World* meets *Changing Rooms*, well fertilised by the "let's go" factor. The idea is that "market researchers" buttonhole a logical "victim" such as a new householder with a barren patch of land and ask them what their ideal garden would be. Then they are tricked into spending 48 hours away while Alan Titchmarsh and his team move in, trying to keep within a prearranged budget. Tonight weeds are replanted artistically (the first unsuspecting owner having said she likes a country feel), earth is churned up, turf laid, a patio pegged out, trees planted, even a compost bin, birdbath and barbecue laid on. The host doubling the ecstasy and astonishment of Mary Lowe in Rockland St Mary, Norfolk, when she sees the result.

The Practice
ITV, 9.00pm

After last week's pilot the series about the idealistic Boston law firm starts in earnest, using the now familiar formula of rapid cutting and punning to highlight several plotlines at once. (Hardly surprising here as writer/producer David Kelley was also responsible for *LA Law* and *Chicago*.)



Intrepid fisherman Liam Dale (BBC2)

Hope! Dylan McDermott, who plays chief lawyer and shaker Bobby, certainly has the requisite charisma as he and his team battle for the rights of a terrified wife and her small son - not for nothing does the lad appear early on - a Robin Hood costume complete with bow and arrow. Then there's a psychotic armed robber. The ongoing (very topical) stung of a giant tobacco firm and the equally ongoing efforts of all the young lawyers to raise enough funding simply to pay their household bills.

Room 101
BBC2, 10.00pm

End of the line and, though it may seem we have been promised Ulrika Jonsson before, she really does Nick Hancock's series. She's a bit of an oddball (is Ulrika - gorgeous to a fault and proud of it (note the coquettish use of legs and tossing hair) but she also has an almost blithely sense of humour. Witness her illustration of how Nick Country types might cope with one of her pet hates - yapping Yorkshire terriers. Other hates include depressing, over-disciplined doctors' surgeries (look out for one of the funniest film clips in the series), sweaty locker-rooms (why are Nick and his guests so preoccupied with knickers and dirty socks?), school hockey and American television obsession with non-stop keep-fit channels. Hit and miss the series may have been, but the hits have far outnumbered the misses. Elizabeth Cowley

RADIO CHOICE

Kaleidoscope Feature: Rocket Man and the Chipolata Fingers
Radio 4, 9.30pm

The second and final part of Paul Gambaccini's interview with Elton John, which for frankness and an absence of prevarication takes some beating. The troubles of wealthy artists are not normally a cause to detain most of us for long but John is so up-front and indeed matter-of-fact about his troubles in the 1980s that the listener is compelled to feel for the man. John clearly prolonged his drug dependency by convincing himself that fame and money meant he needed no help. In a conversation which faded after he had returned to drugs, John says that it was 16 years before he was able to admit that he needed help. Once he did, he started to recover.

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe 8.00am Simon Mayo 12.00am Mary Anne Hobbes. Includes 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.30pm Nicky Campbell 4.00pm Kevin Greening 6.15pm Newsbeat 6.30pm Patsy Tong 8.00pm Essential Selection 10.00pm One in the Jungle 12.00pm Radio 1 Rap Show with Tim Westwood 3.00am Charlie Jordan

RADIO 2

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30am Wake Up to Wogan 8.30am Ken Bruce 11.30am Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Throver 3.00pm Ed Stewart 5.00pm Johnnie Walker 7.00pm Denis Cully Shares the Best of Times 7.30pm Friday Night is Music Night. The BBC Concert Orchestra under Barry Wordsworth, from the Opera House, London. With guest singers Jacquelyn Fugle, John Cashmore and guitarist Juan Martin 8.15pm The Talkers of Panama. John Le Carré reads a short story of his book. Panelists have a major international conspiracy 8.30pm Listen to the Band. Frank Renton presents and conducts a session from the Deafened Colliery Band in Lancashire 10.00pm The Arts Programme with Sheridan Morley 12.00am Charles Nove 4.00am Diane Louise Jordan

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am The Breakfast 8.00am The Magazine 12.00pm Midday 2.00pm Radio 5 News 7.00pm Newsbeat 7.30pm Alan Green's Sportsday 8.30pm Friday Sport. Includes second-half commentary on Brentford v Wycombe Wanderers. David Cress presents the Nationwide League action from Griffin Park. Plus games from the British Masters 10.00pm Page Talk 11.00pm Extra 12.00am After Hours 2.00am Up All Night with Richard Dale 5.00am Morning Reports

TALK RADIO

6.30am Paul Ross and Carol McGiffin 8.00am Scott Chisholm 12.00pm Louise Sra 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00pm Peter Dinkley 7.00pm Muz Dee's Sportszone 10.00pm Mike Allen 1.00am Mike Dorian

The BBC Archive

Radio 3, 2pm

This is a new series but not a new programme. It used to be called *Mining The Archive* but now returns with a more determined BBC label, part of a trend throughout the corporation to ensure that assets are maximised and properly described. The *BBC Proms* instead of the *Henry Wood Promenade Concerts*. The BBC has such a wealth of material that a series like this could run forever without straining and there are some real gems ahead, including live concerts transmitted during the Blitz. This being Radio 3, the emphasis is on the music, but the context often makes the recordings more than a mere artistic artifact. Paul Guinness mines the archive with Simon Rooks, the BBC's senior librarian. Peter Barnard

WORLD SERVICE

6.00am Newsday 6.30am Europe Today 7.00am News 7.15 The World Today 7.30am Close Encounters 7.45 The Way We Are 8.00am News 8.15am On the Spot. Read Over 8.30am Music Review 8.00am News; News in German (6.45 only) 8.10am Focus for Thought 8.15 Performance 8.30am John Peel 10.00am Business 10.15 The Learning World 10.30am BBC English: Speaking of English 10.45am Sport 11.00am Newsday 11.30am Plants of Power 12.00am Newsday 12.30am Focus on Faith 1.00am News in German (6.45 only) 1.05am Business 1.15am News 1.30am News of the World 1.45am Sport 2.00am News 2.05am News 3.05am Outlook 3.30am Music Review 4.00am News 4.05am Football Extra 4.15am Step Too Far 4.30am Science in Action. News in German (6.45 only) 4.35am Europe Today 5.30am Business 5.45am Britain Today 6.00am News 6.15am The World Today 6.30am The Insider's Guide: News in German (6.45 only) 6.40am Spotlight 6.45am Sport 7.00am Newsday 7.30am Focus on Faith 8.00am News 8.01am Outlook 8.25am Focus for Thought 8.30am Music Review 8.00am Newsday 10.00am News 10.05am Business 10.15am News 10.30am People and Politics 11.00am Newsday 11.30am The World Today 11.45am Sport 12.00am News 12.05am Outlook 12.30am Music Review 1.00am Newsday 1.30am From the Weeklies 1.45am Britain Today 2.00am Newsday 2.30am Step Too Far 2.45am The Insider's Guide 2.55am Spotlight 3.00am Newsday 3.30am People and Politics 4.00am News 4.05am Business 4.15am Sport 4.30am The World Today 4.45am On the Spot

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Alan Mann 5.00am Henry Kelly 1.00pm Listener Request Hour 2.00pm Concerto. Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No 1 in B flat major 3.00pm Jamie Cullum 7.00pm Newsday 7.30pm News. J-M Damascus (Soprano) for Fiddle and Harp 8.00pm Evening Concert. Beethoven (Symphony No 6: Symphony No 7) 10.00pm Michael Mappin 2.00am Concerto (r) 4.00am Sally Peterson

VIRGIN RADIO

7.00am Russ and Jane 10.00am Graham Dene 1.00pm Jeremy Clark 4.00pm Nicky Home 7.00pm Nicky Abbott 10.00am Alan Freeman 12.00am Mark Forrest 2.00am Howard Pearce

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Andrew McGregor. Includes Handel (Coronation Anthem No 1, Zadok the Priest); Faure (Theme and Variations); Albeniz, arr Stokowski (Festival in Seville); Vivaldi (Cello Sonata in B flat); Ravel (Valse of Art, Toccata) 8.00am Morning Collection, with Penny Gore. Includes C.P.E. Bach (Concerto in E flat, Baroque (La Belle Voyageuse)); Beethoven (A Colour Symphony) 10.00am Musical Encounters, with Stephanie Hughes. Includes Schubert (Sonata in A major), Dvorak (Violin Sonata in G), Smetana (Mavra, Ma Vlast); Handel (Sonata in B minor); Koehlin (Seven Symphonies, 7th mvt); Smetana (Hollywood Concerto for Solo Violin, Violin Concerto in D) (3/3) (r) 2.00pm The BBC Archive. See Choice 4.00am Music Restored (r) 4.45am Music Machine. Tommy Pearson explores ways in which rules are used across different cultures of the world 5.00pm In Tune, with Sean Rafferty. Includes Stravinsky (Suite, The Firebird); Francaix (Piano Concerto); Milhaud (Le Boeuf sur le Toit) 7.30pm Performance on 3, A concert given at the Church of Our Most Holy Redeemer, Clerkenwell, as part of the 1995 Clerkenwell Series. Margaret Fennell, soprano; Andrew Murgatroyd, tenor; Gordon Hunt, cello; Michael Berkeley, narrator. Includes: New London Orchestra, under Ronald Corp. Delius (Summer Night on the River; On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring); Aranyos Minier (Sonata for Violin); Marcel Widmer (Violin Concerto); Vaughan Williams (An Oxford Elegy) 8.55pm Postscript: The Landscapes of Man Amid the current interest in the environment, this programme investigates ways in which the landscape is shaped by human activity and a new flowering of landscape design talent (5/5) (r) 9.30pm Music for Organ. Graham Barber plays the four-musical Walker organ in Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. Regor (Prelude and Fugue in E) 10.00pm Hear and Now. Andrew Sparling visits the 1997 Vale of Glamorgan Festival. Includes the first performance of Max Richter's *A House Made of Cloud and Eleanor Alberga's Wild Blue Yonder*. The performers include the composers themselves, the Smith Quartet and a percussion quartet led by Chris Brannick 11.30pm Composer of the Week: Verdi (r) 12.30am Songs from Saturn. Jez Nelson investigates the story of the jazz band leader Sun Ra, the jazz band leader who said he came from Saturn 1.00am Through the Night, with Donald Macleod

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping Forecast (LW) 6.00am News Briefing 6.10am Farming Today 6.25am Prayer for the Day 6.30am Today 6.45am Speak After the Bleep (5/5) 6.55am Weather 9.00am News 9.05am Desert Island Discs. Sue Lawley's castaway is the opera singer and actor Willard White 9.45am Feedback. Presented by Chris Dunkley 10.00am News: Libel (FM). Libel barrister Manuel Barca presents a series of courtroom dramas which created a sensation in their day in his bestseller. Exodus. Leon Uris mentioned by name a prisoner, a doctor at Auschwitz who performed experiments in surgery without anaesthetic. The doctor used and both won and lost his case (5/5) 10.00am An Act of Worship (LW) 10.15pm On This Day (LW) 10.30pm Woman's Hour, with Gail Foley 11.30pm The Natural History Programme. Presented by Joanna Prior 12.00pm News: You and Yours, with Mark Whitaker 12.25pm Derek Cooper's Necessary Pleasures. A celebration of strawbees (r) 12.55am Weather 1.00pm The World at One, with Nick Clarke 1.40pm The Archers (r) 1.55pm Shipping Forecast (LW) 2.00pm News: Classic Serial: Lorna Doone. The first part of Barry Letts's adaptation of R.D. Blackmore novel (r) 3.00pm News: The Afternoon Shift, with Laurie Taylor 4.00pm News 4.05am Kaleidoscope. Tim Marlow looks at the works of art currently exhibited in the Royal Academy, and reviews Zoo Warrack in a version of Sophocles's *Electra* 4.45am Short Story: Patience, by Frances Galloway read by Ann Beach (r) 5.00pm P.M. 5.10pm Shipping Forecast 5.55am Weather 6.00pm 5.10pm Shipping Forecast 5.55am Weather 6.30pm Going Places. Survival expert Hugh Macmillan climbs Pen-y-Fan in the Brecon Beacons 7.00pm News 7.05pm The Archers 7.20pm Pick of the Week, with Chris Serie 8.05pm Any Questions? In the first of a new series, Jonathan Dimbleby chairs a topical discussion in Fowlemore, Hertfordshire. The panelists are Michael Ancram, MP; Jackie Ballard, MP; Peter Han, MP, and Mary Ann Sheehy, assistant editor of *The Times* 8.50pm Three Writers in Search of a Character. John Rance talks to Juliet Barker, Steve Davies and Glyn Hughes about *Weathering Heights* (3/4) 9.15pm Letter from America, by Attila Csok 9.30pm Kaleidoscope Feature. See Choice 10.00pm The World Tonight, with Robin Lustig 10.45pm Book at Bedtime: Stories by Mark Twain. Read by Katey Grammer (5/5) 11.00pm Do Go On, with Antley Eliot and guests (3/4) 11.25pm Junction, with Patrick Harner and guests 11.45pm Beyond the Millennium. Dr Clement Beckett leads a Sheila McDonald's predictions for the year 2010 (2/6) 12.00am News 12.05am The Late Book: The Debt to Pleasure, by John Lanchester (10/10) (r) 12.45am Shipping Forecast (LW) 1.00am As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1, FM 97.8-98.8, RADIO 2, FM 88.0-90.2, RADIO 3, FM 90.2-92.4, RADIO 4, FM 92.4-94.8, LW 188, MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE, MW 893, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John Macfarlane.

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YACHTING 44

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SPORT

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 19 1997

Surface tension dominates proceedings in key championship encounter

Kent pitch in for final assault

By SIMON WILDE

CANTERBURY (first day of four: Kent won toss): Kent, with one first-innings wicket in hand, are 93 runs ahead of Surrey

KENT have committed themselves to a dangerous game in their efforts to bring home the county championship for the first time in 19 years. Charged with taking maximum points from their final match and hoping that Glamorgan make errors at Taunton, their strategy was breathtakingly high-risk and looks like costing them three bonus batting points — if not worse — and leaving them reliant on Glamorgan being held to an unlikely draw.

The events of the first day at Canterbury could scarcely have been packed with more drama, but conversation rarely strayed far from the pitch — green, full of pace and bounce, possibly damp early on, and last used four years ago in a Sunday league game made memorable for Viv Richards being hurled in his stroke by a novice called Duncan Spencer.

Surrey, put in by Kent, who won a toss that gave them use of the conditions when the ball swung in the morning haze, were all out in two hours and ten minutes for 124. Kent replied, in their usual tail-wagging-dog fashion, with 217 for nine. Seven batsmen were out for naught and, but for the boundaries being short — the pitch was situated at one end of the square — the balance between bat and ball would be even more lop-sided.

Of the 282 runs that came from the bat, 186 came in boundaries.

With the weather forecast good, this game appears destined for a brutally short finish, which is hardly a fitting climax even for the 3,300 spectators who turned up yesterday. Commenting on the pitch, David Gilbert, the Surrey coach, said: "It has made a mockery of the occasion, which is not to say that we do not think we can still win."

In reality, by stumps Kent were strongly placed to win, possibly even by some time today, but there is the remote possibility that they will be docked points for preparing such a "sporting" surface.

With 19 wickets falling, umpires Jesty and Whitehead reported the pitch as a matter of course, but this was more than a routine step. "We think it is an underprepared pitch," Jesty said. A delegation of England and Wales Cricket Board officials can be expected at the ground today.

The pitch gave all the bowlers assistance, so much so that when a spin bowler, Rupesh Amin, the Surrey left-arm, was finally introduced shortly before tea, having watched the fast-medium bowlers move the ball around extravagantly, he turned four of his first nine balls markedly, the last of them accounting for Steve Marsh.

He continued long after tea and posed further problems, but curiously, Salisbury, the only other slow bowler in the game, was not called upon.

Even part-time seamers such as Radcliffe and Butcher made the ball pop occasionally; that said, no one was physically hurt.

Kent thought that they were playing to their strength by preparing a pitch to suit the seamers and so it looked for much of the day. Even though Headley and McCague were on the sidelines, Igglesden and Thompson proved themselves worthy stand-ins with the new ball. Thompson, having slipped over on the dew in delivery during the first over, followed up by removing Bicknell and Radcliffe in his second.

By the time he finished his spell, he had claimed four for 33 and Surrey were 40-odd for six. When Igglesden came off, with exemplary figures of 10-4-17-2, they were 70 for six. Neither was required to return as Phillips, Ealham and Fleming, swiftly accounted for Butcher — who had seen six partners depart and batted for 100 minutes, despite suffering from a stomach upset — and the tail before the first session was complete.

By now, those with a taste for conspiracy theories were sharpening their pencils because Surrey's commitment to the fixture had been in question ever since Gilbert had made some ambiguous remarks after their recent match with Glamorgan.

But in truth most of the Surrey wickets were due to sound bowling: perhaps only Brown, caught on the boundary hooking, and Lewis, who drove tamely into the hands of cover, brought about their own downfalls.

The rumours were soon scotched once Kent took the field, as Surrey fought hard to get back into the game. Lewis removed Fulton with the first ball, Wells and Smith, who added 60 for the third wicket, might have been separated countless times, and when Kent were 126 for six, just two runs in front, the game was finely balanced.

The situation, however, was tailor-made for Ealham, who sniffed the air for an hour before punching his first boundary. As the ball softened, so the recovery gathered momentum. He added 36 with Marsh and 51 with Phillips and reached his fifty, the first of the game, after 2½ hours. He was removed in the next over only by a fine running catch by Butcher. It may be all to little avail.



Ed Smith, the Kent batsman, is relieved to see a slip catch dropped by Butcher

RACING 39

Eddery forced to take a back seat



Jordan ends Hill's search for spare seat

FROM MICHAEL CALVIN IN ZELTWEG, AUSTRIA

THE demeaning saga of Damon Hill's struggle for alternative employment will reach a merciful conclusion at the AJ Ring in central Austria today, when he will be confirmed as the partner for Ralf Schumacher at Jordan Grand Prix next season.

A press conference called for 9.30am by Eddie Jordan, the team owner, will be the final act in a soap opera that has veered in emotional content between a whodunnit and a French farce. Even by the surreal standards of Formula One's silly season, the agonising over Hill's future has been bizarre.

He has been linked in recent weeks with virtually every team with a car that has a wheel on each corner. Already embarrassed by public rejections by Prost and McLaren, he was irked to discover yesterday that his departure from Arrows was being billed in some quarters as a humiliating dismissal.

He made the defiant gesture of setting the quickest time in a familiarisation session on the new circuit, set in the Styrian Mountains, but was notably downcast at a paddock party to mark his 37th birthday.

This had fallen the previous day when Tom Walkinshaw, the Arrows owner, refused to enter the spirit of things and announced that he had signed Mika Salo, the Finnish driver, for 1998. In Hill's place, Hill refused to talk in specific terms about his future, as he shared champagne and chocolate cake with his critics, although he insisted that he was "very relaxed".

True to the bluff and bluster of the negotiating process, he added archly that "it is always nice when you can concentrate on driving, on doing your job". The inference, that he was secure in the knowledge that Jordan had succumbed to the pressure applied by his principal sponsor to recruit a British driver, was obvious. The harsh logic is that both parties had little reason to resist a marriage of convenience.

The strength of the latest sub-plot was reinforced last night when it became clear that Jordan had failed to exercise his right of appeal against a High Court judgment obliging him to return Giancarlo Fisichella, the promising Italian, to Benetton at the end of the season.

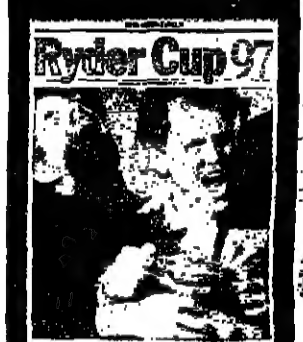
This meant that all the leading drivers had been accounted for in Formula One's annual game of musical chairs. Hill was left alone with the final seat still vacant. His asking price of £5 million was the only source of possible conflict.

Jordan need a driver of Hill's undoubted analytical ability. Had he taken his world title to the Silverstone-based team at the end of last season, as had seemed possible during negotiations between Eddie Jordan and Hill's advisers at East Midlands airport last autumn, it is unlikely that they would still be waiting for their first victory. In addition, Hill is likely to be a restraining influence on the younger Schumacher, who has had difficulty coming to terms with being overshadowed by Fisichella.

Hill's reputation, for sensitivity in handling a difficult car, is well founded. He is certainly held in high respect by the Arrows mechanics, who have valued his temperament and level-headed approach to the occasional absurdities of a largely uncompetitive season.

"I want to get a win before I leave, to finish off the job I nearly completed in Hungary," Hill said. "That would be my gift to the team for everything they have done for me this year. That might be a bit of a dream, but we still have four races left. I have enjoyed myself with Arrows and, on the whole, I am sorry to be leaving. We are parting in good terms."

In THE TIMES on Monday

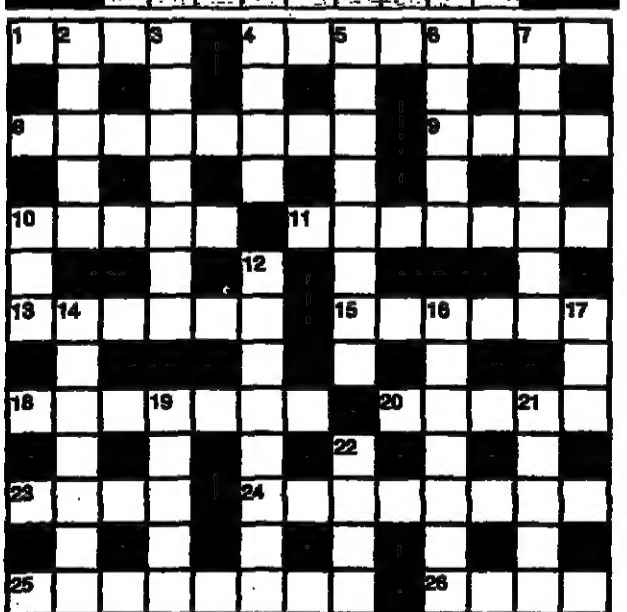


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CANTERBURY SCOREBOARD

SURREY: First Innings	
D J Radcliffe c Marsh b Thompson	0
M A Butcher c Marsh b Phillips	38
D J Radcliffe b Thompson	38
*A J Stewart c Fulton b Igglesden	4
A D Brown c Wells b Thompson	0
A D Brown c Wells b Thompson	0
B H Holford c Smith b Thompson	0
C C Lewis c Fleming b Phillips	27
I D K Salisbury c Marsh b Ealham	8
S E Bennett not out	17
R M Amin b Fleming	4
Total (27 overs)	124
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0, 2-27, 3-27, 4-29, 5-29, 6-40, 7-41, 8-101, 9-105	
BOWLING: Igglesden 10-4-17-2; Thompson 8-1-24-4; Ealham 5-0-28-1; Phillips 2-0-19-2; Fleming 2-0-15-1	
KENT: First Innings	
D P Fulton c Butcher b Lewis	0
E T Smith b J Benjamin	26

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1203

- ACROSS
- 1 S. Am. "ostrich" (4)
 - 4 Analysis of poetic metre (8)
 - 8 Earn degree (8)
 - 9 Widespread (4)
 - 10 Ignominy (5)
 - 11 Post from admirers (3,4)
 - 13 Jump (on prey) (6)
 - 15 One avoiding Dickens' was Artful (6)
 - 18 Substantial, important (7)
 - 20 Love feast; open-mouthed (5)
 - 23 Work for, group of three (4)
 - 24 Of music theatre (8)
 - 25 Public computer link (8)
 - 26 Hastened (4)
- DOWN
- 2 Severe (5)
 - 3 Insect's rear section (7)
 - 4 Skin mark; craggy outcrop (4)
 - 5 William IV's queen (8)
 - 6 Blood fluid (5)
 - 7 In illegal position (football) (7)
 - 10 Tiny taste of liquid (3)
 - 12 Disastrous failure, esp. nuclear (8)
 - 14 Infest; easily defeat (7)
 - 16 Hot, inactive period (3,4)
 - 17 Part of fish type of deer (3)
 - 19 Small wood; music dictionary (5)
 - 21 Winner's reward (5)
 - 22 Immediately following (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1202

ACROSS: 1 Verbose 5 Maze 8 Jungle 9 Palfrey 10 On the run 12 Deck 13 Parthenon 17 Rest 18 Wrestler 20 Linear 21 Grotto 23 Lens 24 Crudity

DOWN: 2 Equine 3 Bug 4 Steer 5 Maladroit 6 Zurich 7 Sponge 11 Heartless 14 Thwart 15 Define 16 Sextet 19 Elgar 22 Odd

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Wright let off with warning

By JOHN GOODBODY

IAN WRIGHT, the volatile Arsenal and England forward, was cleared by the Football Association of a misconduct charge yesterday and then claimed that justice had triumphed over the mass hysteria of the media.

Patrick Vieira, Wright's Arsenal team-mate, and Steve Walsh, the Leicester City captain, were also cleared by the FA of misconduct charges after an incident between the rival teams at the end of a 3-3 draw in the FA Carling Premiership at Filbert Street on August 27. However, Pat Rice, the assistant manager at Arsenal, was fined £500 for making "unseemly comments" to an official in the dressing-room after the game.

After a three-hour hearing, the FA warned all three players about their future conduct and ordered them to share the costs of the hearing. Wright was particularly relieved that the ordeal was over. He had been fined £15,000 in July after separate incidents against Blackburn Rovers and Coventry City last season. The FA had then warned Wright that, if he appeared before them again in similar and proven circumstances, "the severest penalties, removing him from the game for some considerable time, would be inevitable". This hinted at a 12-match ban on this occasion: a sentence then widely predicted in certain sections of the media.

The FA disciplinary commission investigated the case at Leicester after Graham Barber, the referee, had reported Wright, Vieira and Walsh for "adopting an aggressive attitude".

Wright said after the hearing: "I am just pleased that this is all over because there has been anguish and the FA

had been put under pressure by the media. It must have been difficult for it to reach the right decision."

It turned into mass hysteria in the media just after it happened, but I always knew I had not done anything. I knew I would get a fair hearing and I am just glad that the FA has been able to show it can come to the right decision no matter what people write about."

The referee told the three-man commission that there had been no violence in the

Davies added that it had been necessary to investigate the referee's report. "You have to hear it and act accordingly. That is what justice is all about. You test the case and there was one to answer."

He emphasised that the FA had told Wright in July "still stands".

The Leicester manager, Martin O'Neill, said: "When you have a personality such as Ian Wright involved, you know you are in for a long process but the term 'storm in a tea-cup', which has been bandied about still holds for me."

"The only thing is that all this might act as a good warning to players to get off the field as soon as possible after the matches."

Wright had run back on to the field after being substituted towards the end of the game. Arsène Wenger, his manager, had told him to go to applaud the travelling Arsenal supporters.

Wright admitted that he had then become caught up in a mêlée that developed when the Arsenal players surrounded the referee to ask why so much stoppage time had been added on at the end of a match in which Leicester had equalised seconds before the whistle blew.

West Ham United signed Ian Pearce, the Blackburn Rovers defender, yesterday in a deal which could be worth up to £2.3 million, depending on appearances. Pearce, 23, is a replacement for Marc Rieper, the Denmark international, who moved from Upton Park to Celtic for £1.4 million last week.

A former England Under-21 defender, Pearce made 57 Premiership starts for Blackburn, but has been left on the substitutes' bench this season.

Jackson to resume training

DARREN JACKSON, the Celtic striker, is due to resume light training on Monday. The medical authorities are pleased with the progress of the Scotland international after his operation two weeks ago to remove excess fluid from the brain.

The Southern General Hospital in Glasgow houses the leading head injury unit in Scotland and Richard Morgan, a spokesman, said: "Darren has recovered extremely quickly after surgery. I know he had doubts and fears about the operation but we're all delighted he is ready to restart training."

Some patients do recover quite soon after an operation of this kind and the fact that Darren is an athlete could well have helped speed up that process." It appears that if Jackson sustains his progress he could be ready to resume playing in the new year.

Jock Brown, the Celtic general manager, is delighted at the way the player has responded and said: "All the signs are positive and from our point of view it's brilliant he's ready to link up with the squad again."

Jackson yesterday faced the cameras and media for the first time since his illness was revealed after the Uefa Cup game against FC Tirol last month. He said he had been overwhelmed by messages of support from all over the country sent to him by football supporters and also people unconnected with the game.

"So many people have taken the time to write a letter or write a card, it has been marvellous," he said. "These letters and cards have been a big help to me."

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Destination	BT	FT	Savings
USA	24p	16p	58%
IRE	23p	15p	33%
SOUTH AFRICA	80p	47p	41%
JAPAN	77p	50p	66%

STANDARD RATE one minute call including VAT.

If you've got a BT phone, you can make big savings to over 250 countries by adding First Telecom's service to it. Think first, before you make another long distance call.

FIRST TELECOM
0800 458 6666.